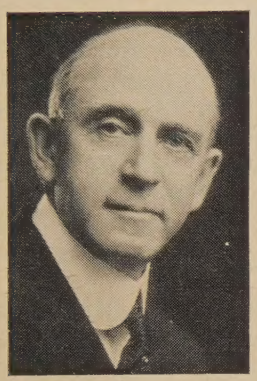
The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



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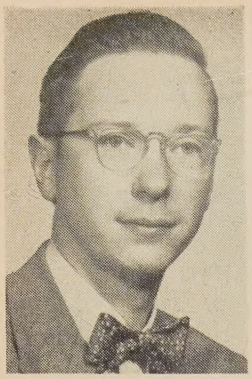
VOL. XXII, NO. 6 JUNE, 1951



By F. J. Cerny, M.D.

MEDICINE AND

I dare say that you have heard eminent physicians say to a patient who comes to them with bad eyes that they cannot cure his eyes by themselves but that if his eyes are to be cured his head must be treated; and then again they say that to think of curing the head alone and not the rest of the body also, is the height of folly. And arguing in this way they apply their methods to the whole body and try to treat and heal the whole and the part together. Did you ever observe that this is what they say?

PLATO: *Charmides*

PLATO did not stop here with the body. He well recognized that the mind, too, was part of the whole man and must be included in medical treatment. In fact he saw that many conditions could be treated *onlu* through the mind.

Now, centuries later, modern medicine proclaims the same ideas, calling them "psychobiology" and the treatments "psychotherapy." Medical men estimate that from 50 to 90 per cent of human illnesses have a significant mental factor, and that a great portion of this percentage are on a totally mental or emotional basis. To repeat these statistics in medical writing would be to risk being accused of triteness. So basic a truth was consistently recognized and emphasized by Jesus in his ministry. These examples, too, are more than familiar to all of us.

Now one would suppose, in the face of this massive accumulation of evidence, that the idea would permeate somehow down into the daily practices of those who hold the human body and mind most closely to their scrutiny—the physician and the minister. But that is only partially the case.

Minister to Chiropractor

Some months ago I thoroughly examined a patient, a young married woman, who complained of many pains and deficiencies of the eyes. Although suspecting the emotional factor, I put her through all the tests to rule out one by one various conditions which could produce her symptoms —visual field testing for nerve defects; measurement of the pressure of the eye; refraction with drops; slit lamp microscope studies. When we had finished I sat down with her, and in gentle but no uncertain terms explained to her that the manifold symptoms originated not in the eyes but in her own self. She knew it. She admitted it. "But what can I do about it?" she whined. After learning something of her environment, I asked, "Have you ever gone over this problem with your minister?" With astonished eyes, puzzled and caught off guard, she said, "What could *he* do about it?" (This is an almost invariable retort; at times a tone of disdain colors the question.) Before we parted, she promised to visit her minister and ask for advice.

A month or two later she again consulted me briefly. She had felt much better since our talk, but she still had symptoms. What about the minister? "Well, he thought I had best go to a chiropractor!"

Admittedly this is an extreme example, but it reveals the gulf which lies at times between medicine and the ministry.

Blend Medicine with Faith

In searching for the reason for this gulf, I am going to begin with two basic premises:

1. Faith in God and love for God, as taught and lived by his Son, offers the most workable and comprehensive design for living our daily lives and is the most effective and available prophylactic known for mental and emotional ills.

2. Medical science, striving to understand the working methods of the Creator, and the ministry, as a direct extension of the voice of Jesus, are the logical and necessary partners in treating this fast increasing form of disability—the emotional illness.

Tighten Teamwork

Why then is this teamwork lax? And how can it be tightened?

To begin with, the schools of medicine and the ministry do not stress this coordination. Yes, I know there is an ever increasing number of subjects to be included in the basic curriculum, but a close examination shows many that could be relegated to lesser positions. Although psychiatry is included in some ministerial schools as an elec-

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This physician is convinced that medical science and faith work together to cure mental illnesses

THE MINISTRY

tive, in no catalogue available to me do I see the words "physiology," "psychobiology" or "advanced psychology"—something to indicate a medical element in the course. I presume that some of this subject matter has been studied in the college of liberal arts— but how consistently, and how well coordinated?

In our medical school curriculums too I see the subjects of theology and religion listed only in one or two Roman Catholic colleges. Here they are camouflaged by titles like "Ethics" and "Psychology," but they are in reality basic courses in scholastic philosophy. Whatever their name, courses of this type belong in every medical school curriculum.

Proper Treatment

The treatment for this condition? It should be obvious: Place a physician—preferably a general practitioner—and a psychiatrist on the faculty of every seminary, and a minister and priest (a rabbi, too, if needed) on the active lecturing staff of every medical school. Integrate their lectures into the total course. The students may not appreciate their importance at the time—but what school subject has not at times suffered a similar fate?

In both medicine and the ministry, graduation from school is considered but the threshold to greater learning. In organized medicine, brilliant as its postgraduate educational program is, the subject of the religious approach is obviously too complex and too individual to be considered in open meetings or courses of instruction. Nor am I familiar with any organized advanced training for the general ministry in medically related fields. I would be happy to learn that it does exist.

The Physician's Religion

Once swept into the current of daily practice, both the minister and the physician would find any common interests between them swallowed up by the incessant undertow of everyday problems. But there is a need to rise above the current and concern ourselves with things more fundamental.

Should not the physician consult the minister —at least by listening to his messages from the pulpit—to fortify his own religious stability and to bring into play the minister's ideas on specific problems? And should not the minister try, without violating the doctor-patient relation, to understand better the illnesses of those of his flock to whom he is expected to minister? No doubt rebuffs will be met at both ends, and difficulties will arise; but aren't they inevitable when we try to coordinate a complex soul with a complex body in a complex world?

Science Works with God

Except for a few notable instances in past years, medicine and the ministry have failed to sit down together at the round table and give vent to their trials, confess their gropings, find out what they have in common, and share their experience in the solution of these problems.

From where should the call for common meeting come? I am sure this is an individual problem for each community; but whatever its source, I know only good can result from such a meeting. The minister may come to realize that he cannot attack each emotional aberration with the same idea-weapons; that a brain with sclerotic arteries will not respond in the same way as one driven by some intangible compulsion; that in many instances the standard flowery expressions of hope are wasted and that what is needed is a bit of sharp psychotherapy (or whatever you may call it). If a few lips begin to curl at this statement, let us remember that truth belongs to God, no matter who discovers it, how it is found or what name is tacked on to it. If the ministry were as effective in saturating the populace with their *sound* truths as our advertising specialists are with their *semi*truths, the percentage of mentally ill could be measurably reduced, I am sure.

On his side, the physician may come to realize that his own faith needs an overhauling and revitalization; that the minister is his ally rather than the delivery boy of sentimental pamphlets to his hospital patients; that all too often he has let the words of Christ coming from the pulpit fall on deaf ears; that the Kingdom of God calls for greater humility and compassion on his part; that while the accurate flames of specialized medicine have searched out and burned away many disease entities, many more remain untouched; and that both he and his patients still have need of God's serene assurance—and his ministers.

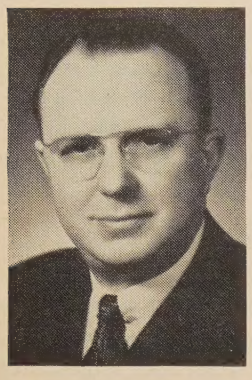
Progress involves risk. You can't steal 2nd and keep your feet on 1st base.—*L & N Magazine.*

The Real Culprit

By Ansley Cunningham Moore

Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14:34.

THERE is one witness the Senate crime investigating committee did not call. To be sure, Frank Costello, the alleged kingpin of America's underworld, was put on the stand. So were the Carrolls, the Clancys, the O'Dwyers, the Morans. There was the secretary of the Firemen's Union of New York City. All of us saw on television and heard on radio Senators Kefauver, O'Conner, Hunt and Tobey. We became familiar with the metallic voice of the committee's chief counsel, Mr. Halley. We heard many people who are supposedly connected with the underworld, but they were there, we tried to remind ourselves, as witnesses, not defendants. Who is the *real* culprit?



Costello bore the brunt of the nation's wrath. But the real villain never came onto the stage in this nationwide drama. This culprit remained just offstage, yet he was always there, like a ghost in the background or like the rabbit in "Harvey." As I watched the panorama of gangster faces, sometimes leering, smirking, arrogant, sometimes timid, silent, frightened, but always tragic, I kept thinking of the guilty witness who was like a presence felt but not seen. That culprit is the *indifferent public.*

You and I Were There

Who made up this galaxy of common people? Just as you and I were there "when they crucified my Lord," so we were there when the crime situation in America was steadily worsening, resulting in this investigation. Certainly you and I are among the guilty, somewhere in the mob that makes up the indifferent public. In this horde of the indifferent are the double-talking critics of good men in government. A friend of mine was talking to a nationally known commentator and columnist who, a short time ago, was a real progressive, open-minded on all questions. Now he is reactionary, opposed to everything that spells change. When the friend asked how he could change his thinking overnight, he replied, "There's more money now on *this* side!" He is part of the indifferent public. There are others: the rabid party man who puts party above country; the person who won't vote; the man of character who, when invited, won't go into government; the person who says, "You can't do anything about it—forget it!" But there are still others: the religious man who is more concerned about theology than ethics, about creed than character; the public official who is an opportunist, who asks regarding every public issue, "What effect will this have upon my future, upon the next election?"

But we are not through listing the culprits. There is the job-seeker who is after a berth on the band wagon—it doesn't matter which band wagon or where it is going, just so he gets on. Then there are the people who think government is something to live *on,* not *under;* the chiseler on the government relief rolls; the businessman who does business with the crooked public official or the racketeers. Among the guilty, too, are the naive who believe anything they see in print. There's an old saying down in Georgia that runs, "I know it's so 'cause I seed it in the *Atlanta Constitution.*" There is the absorbed professional man who has no time for anything but his work, not even for the newspapers. There are the shallow-minded who always manage to divert the conversation when important issues are being discussed. One would have to list, too, the unthinking who worship uncritically their public heroes. An indifferent public, you see, is the real culprit in the crime situation in America.

Revelations of the Hearings

The hearings of Senator Kefauver's committee have shown that large-scale rackets cannot exist without police—that is, political—protection. Again and again, it was brought out that racketeers had bribed and bought public officials, that police had offered protection for illegal and immoral practices for a price. Frank Costello admitted that he had many "associates" in Tammany Hall. Others of the underworld confessed to "buddying" with law-enforcement agents. "Gifts" that run into five and six figures passed from gangsters' hands to government officials and police. Our mayor has told me personally that he defies anybody to produce one racketeer who has any influence in Pittsburgh. Be that as it may, across the nation, it is clear, rackets must have police protection to operate. Somebody somewhere ought to be excited about it.

Further, it has been established beyond a doubt

A native of Georgia, ANSLEY C. MOORE has spread his footprints all over this country and part of the world. He was Presbyterian delegate to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches at Geneva, Switzerland, and to the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam, Holland, both in August 1948. Having held pastorates in Georgia, Florida and Alabama, Dr. Moore is now minister of Sixth United Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa.

that gambling—whether you believe it wrong or not has nothing to do with this point—corrupts everything it touches. It has been shown that gambling on a wide scale endows racketeers with great fortune; that the racketeers in turn buy officials, sink their claws into legitimate business, tie in with and then control the drug traffic and prostitution, and eventually all other forms of illegality and immorality.

Morality of Gambling

Let us return now to the question of whether or not gambling is morally wrong. There is no reasonable doubt about it, if you are a Christian. The Roman church's method of raising money by bingo games for charity does not change this. That church is guilty of spreading the idea that gambling is harmless. Gambling is wrong because it damages personality. The $40-a-week clerk who wins $200 on a $2 bet is likely rendered incapable of working happily thereafter at his old job because he has received a very large return from a small investment. He has taken $198 from society and has put nothing back. This damages personality and is therefore morally wrong. Gambling is also a denial of the Christian teaching regarding the stewardship of possessions. Everything the Christian possesses comes from God, and the Christian is responsible for *all* his money. One can scarcely render a satisfactory account of his stewardship to almighty God when he has thrown his money away.

Furthermore, gambling is wrong morally because it now supports a network of evil which is corrupting our nation. If we follow the teachings of Jesus we know that supporting anything which corrupts others is morally wrong. The idea of one nationally known gambler, that gambling is a biological necessity because it gives substance to our daydreams, is simply educated nonsense. The very fact that the Roman church officially encourages gambling is evidence of the subtle corruption of this evil. Lust for money and power alone could account for this amazing spectacle. Gambling is a moral disease and any ethical religion, especially New Testament religion, must oppose it.

Waning Public Morals

The Senate's investigation of America's crime situation has also revealed that gambling on a nationwide scale cannot exist without rapid communication, that is, without telephone and telegraph service. Gambling on horse races, for example, is dependent upon the bettor's knowing immediately whether or not he has won so that he will know how to bet on the next race which follows in a few minutes. Without telephone and telegraph this is impossible. The telephone and telegraph companies deny service when they know it is for illegitimate purposes, but surely these companies are aware of what is going on when there are half a dozen telephones in a small room over a dry-cleaning establishment.

Another conclusion to be indisputably drawn from the Senate committee's investigation is that public morality has broken down. After several weeks of investigating the Reconstruction Finance Corportion, Senator Fulbright of Arkansas on the floor of the Senate had this to say: "The essence of what we have been studying in our committee is but a reflection of what may be seen in many other phases of our national life. The government and its activities are, in a very real sense, a mirror of our national life. . . . Too many people in our nation do not believe anything with conviction. They question the concepts of God or of man, indiscriminately."

While these words were still echoing in the Senate chambers, some ancient words were being heard by many: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." I am not forgetting that the great majority of people are law-abiding and, in the main, honest citizens. Yet the Senate's investigation into crime in this country has been an experience for us like lifting the lid from an old garbage can and putting one's face down in it.

An indifferent public is responsible for this situation. Thomas Jefferson once said, "Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone."

God Gave a Law

This alarming and deplorable situation leads this preacher to remind America, for one thing, that God gave to man a law which binds him and his posterity. This moral law of God binds all mankind "to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience." Almighty God, giver of this moral law, has promised man "life upon the fulfilling." More than that, God has threatened "death upon the breach of it." In addition to this, God endued man with "power and ability to keep it." "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. 30:19).

Americans need to be reminded that this moral law is set forth in the Ten Commandments, the first four of which state our duties toward God, the last six of which state our duties toward man. Our clear duty to God is to recognize him and him alone as God; to worship none other; to keep his name holy and to honor his Sabbath. Our duties toward man are to honor our parents, and human personality, by refraining from murder and adultery; to honor personal property by not stealing; to honor truth by not bearing false witness; and to refrain from covetousness.

One of the by-products of Big Business and Big Government and Big Labor in America is a loss of a sense of personal responsibility and personal integrity. It should be realized that governments

The Pulpit for June, 1951. Volume XXII, Number 6. Published monthly by the Christian Century Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Telephone HArrison 7-5380. Price this issue: 30 cents; $3 a year in U. S. A. and Canada. Foreign $3.25. Copyrighted 1951 by Christian Century Foundation. Entered as second-class matter May 14, 1942 in Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

are not moral or immoral. It is the individuals who make up the governments who have morals or lack them. As Sommerfeld said, "We should know that conscience, reason, knowledge, integrity, judgment, and all other virtues are the distinctive and exclusive properties of individual persons."

The Authority of God

This preacher would remind America of another truth, namely, that this moral law has a double significance. The matter contained in it is important as a standard of conduct by which man must judge his actions. But more than that, the further significance has to do with the authority of God the Creater who gave that law. If you listened to the investigation of crime by the Senate committee you probably smiled when Senator Tobey occasionally boiled over at some leering, smirking boss of the rackets who defied the committee and refused to talk, standing on his constitutional rights, when we all knew that he disregarded the rights of all decent citizens in the land. Some called Senator Tobey's puritanical outbursts old-fashioned. But the reason for the Senator's righteous indignation is the fact that moral values have meaning for him. God's righteous law is still in effect for him. In short, God's authority is real to him.

Above all else, America needs to return to a righteous God of authority. Specifically, what can you do about it all?

You can refuse to support *any* enterprise that is not legitimate. You can support all law-enforcement agencies. You can vote in *every* election, intelligently. You can be informed. You can read critically. You can love goodness and hate evil. You can walk close to Christ and have his mind. And you can pray for America.

A Pastoral Prayer

By William R. Stevenson

Pastor, Union Congregational Church
Jacksonville, Florida

10-21-57

ETERNAL SPIRIT, whom we have come to know as our Father and as the Divine Companion of all our ways, as we worship in the beauty and holiness of this sanctuary, we remember many things.

We remember that thou art the source of our life and that thou dost sustain our lives day by day. We acknowledge and are thankful that our life begins and ends in thee.

We remember that every impulse in us toward the good, every stirring of our conscience, every moment of dissatisfaction with our present living, comes from thee. We are conscious that everything that is beautiful—a bit of music, a line of poetry, a flaming sunrise, the wondrous light in the eyes of a child, a deed of mercy, an act of selfless courage—whatever it may be, it is thy voice speaking to us. Thou art in all that is beautiful, all that is good, all that is true. In this moment of remembrance we offer our thanksgiving to thee.

We remember too that there is much in life that is contrary to thy will: much untruth, much ugliness, much evil—in our lives and in all of life. Some of this we cannot understand why it should be. But we know that much of it is the fault of us and of our fellows. We have often been concerned with our own comfort, to the exclusion of the needs of others. We have often been blind and needlessly proud. We have often been thoughtless of those about us, intolerant of new ideas, fearful of accepting new truth. In this moment of remembrance, O God, we ask thy forgiveness for our failures, our shortcomings and our sin.

We remember too that there are those among us and in our circle of acquaintances who are in need this day—in need of our help and in need of thy help. There are those who are ill and who still face long days of uncertainty. There are those who have lost loved ones. There are those who have undergone disappointment or failure and are near to despair. There are those who, unknown to anyone else, are being tempted almost above what they are able to endure. And there are many in this world of thine unknown to us, but who are still thy children and our brothers, who are hungry and homeless, hopeless and afraid. In this moment of remembrance, O God, awaken our spirits to the particular needs of those whom we know, that from our friendship and concern they may gain needed courage. Widen our circle of awareness, that we may minister through our compassion and our gifts and our prayers to thy children everywhere.

We remember and are thankful that in thy presence there is strength for those of us who are weak, courage for those of us who are afraid, comfort for those of us who mourn, triumph for those of us who are tempted, new life and new challenge for every one of us when we turn to thee. Accept these prayers of ours, hesitant, incomplete though they may be, in the name of that One whose name is above every name, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Human beings are either strutting oddities in a cosmic sideshow or they are sons of God.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain at the University of Chicago.*

Church members can be divided into three classes: The Faithful Few, the Mutable Many, and the Fugitive Fringe.—*Anon.*

A commencement sermon challenging young graduates to conquer new frontiers of human relations

New Frontiers Beckon

By Paul Minnich Robinson

IF I could choose any period of history in which to live, I would certainly want to live now and in the next half-century. Not that these are easy times, but our age is filled with paradoxes of the strangest sort. We have at the same time prosperity and want, peace and war, strength without security, and advancement without progress. As one writer has pointed out, we are powerful, but we are fearful too. We are sensual but not satisfied. We are skillful, yet we are tragically ignorant. We are neighbors, but we are not neighborly. We have learned how to see through things, but not how to look into life. It is into this kind of world that you and thousands of other young people like you are entering in this significant moment, and, by the accident of birth, it will be your privilege to be a part of the most interesting chapter in the history of mankind.

It is now one year past half-past 1900, the first year of the new half-century. This is certainly no time for playing Pollyanna. Our fathers tried to say, "Every day in every way I am getting better and better." But we have learned what it means to be betrayed by a false kind of optimism, and we know now that the world will never be made better by our closing our eyes to the things that should not be.

I would not for a moment want you to begin this new and grander era of your life with any sense of defeat. At the same time, I believe that the beginning of hope for you lies in a clear and calm understanding of the kind of world you have inherited. In one of his books, Ralph Sockman tells of an Indian bishop who, living in the country, had a rooster that would crow each morning at two o'clock while it was still quite dark. Puzzled by the strange behavior of this usually reliable bird, the bishop decided one night to stay up to see what caused the rooster to crow at such an hour. He discovered that the last trolley car from the city passed his home at just that moment, and the rooster had mistaken the headlight for the sun and the breaking of the day. We must admit that too many of us, in our anxiety for a better world, have been mistaking the light of every passing headlight for the dawn of a new day. These are trying times indeed, but times of greatest opportunity. The new world is before you, and you are its pioneers.

PAUL MINNICH ROBINSON, pastor of First Church of the Brethren, Hagerstown, Md., is a prominent leader of his denomination and a Pulpit editorial associate. Widely known as a radio preacher and active in many National Council of Churches' organizations, Dr. Robinson at present serves on the executive committee of the Brethren General Brotherhood Board. He is a frequent contributor to religious journals.

Always a Frontier

In his great book *The Epic of America,* James Truslow Adams says that one of the things which have made America great is that she always had a frontier. When life was hard in one place, the spirit of adventure could always lead those who had enough courage to new and untried areas in the west where life could begin again. It was the awareness that there was something beyond to conquer that gave to the nation the hardiness from which was born the American spirit. Little by little, however, those frontiers were pushed back. Once while traveling in Nebraska I stopped in a little hamlet of a few houses and discovered that it was called Frontiers End. There was a time when it was only an outpost of civilization, but the pioneers of the past had long since pushed beyond it until they reached the sea, and the frontiers were no more. Similarly, the geographical frontiers all over the world have rapidly disappeared as the world has been brought closer and closer together by the twin miracles of transportation and communication. So, says the historian, the problem in America, and in the world, is really the loss of our frontiers.

I wonder if our frontiers are really gone. It is true that we have conquered distance, until there is little left on the earth to explore. But if we are wise enough, perhaps we can see that the world's largest and most difficult frontiers are still before us. In the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, the frontiers of the world were geographical. It was the era of Columbus, Magellan, the trading companies, and the colonists who were seeking a new life in a new world. In the 18th century, the frontiers were in the area of government, when men were endeavoring to forge upon the anvil of human rights the freedoms which we today so cherish. The 19th century frontiers were industrial, when the world economy began to expand with a program of manufacturing and trade which changed the life of every nation. In the

first half of the 20th century, the frontiers were certainly in the realm of science, with the unlocking of the secrets of the universe in discoveries which have not only revolutionized our way of living but have brought the world together into a small neighborhood.

Frontiers of Human Relations

If all this be true, certainly the frontiers of this latter half of the 20th century are in the area of human relations. The real question facing our generation is, Can we live together in a world like this? Unless this problem is solved, there will be no other problems. We have entered upon a new era of power which is almost beyond our imagination. It is a power that can become mankind's greatest blessing, or can destroy us all. Whether it will be our servant or our master will largely depend upon whether or not we can develop the kind of moral and spiritual resources that will enable us to control ourselves.

Among the papers of the late F. Scott Fitzgerald was the plot for a play that was never written. It is about five widely separated members of a family who would inherit a house if they all lived in it together. Here indeed is the plot for the great human drama of the next half-century. Neither the world nor any part of it any longer belongs to any one race or nation. Unless it belongs to all, it will belong to none.

Dean Wicks of Princeton used to say that in the old days of the one-room country school, not too much attention was given to fire drills. There was just about one window for every pupil, and in any emergency it was every man for himself out the nearest window. However, in this day of large consolidated schools, the principle of every man for himself will no longer work. A rush by everyone to the nearest exit would mean disaster. So, to protect all, our children are taught to cooperate in orderly fire drills. The safety of their own life will depend upon the consideration they give to the lives of others. So it is with the world of which we are a part. This frontier of human relations must be conquered if life is to be safe anywhere.

Pioneering Is Difficult

So, whether you like it or not, you are the pioneers of a new world. As the Indies called Columbus to adventure, so are we challenged by the possibility of a world without war. As the explorers of another century set out to discover new lands, so are we set on a pilgrimage to find a new spirit which will bring peace and understanding.

Pioneering is never easy. We remember with a certain amount of pride the stories of hardships endured by our fathers in the westward migrations of America. We recall the heroism and sacrifice of those noble men and women. Let us not be deceived. The spiritual pioneering to which you are called also has its cost. You will soon discover that the most difficult conquest in the world is the mastery of the human heart. The greatest enemy of world peace—human nature—will be no easy frontier to conquer.

In the last analysis, man himself is the problem of our time. We speak of our vexing social, economic and international problems, but they are really but the projection of our own human weaknesses. Before we can conquer the world, we must conquer ourselves. Before there can be a better world, we must be better people. Before we can have world brotherhood, we ourselves must be brotherly. That sounds childishly simple, but I wonder if this elementary truth is not too often forgotten in the capitals of the world. It is not institutions that succeed or fail; it is people. The church or school will be good or bad according to the character of the people within them. The League of Nations did not fail; the people of those nations failed their institution. The success of the United Nations will depend not so much on the plan of organization under which it operates as on the determination of the people by whom it was established to bring peace through cooperation. The problem of peace lies not in our institutions, but in us. The Great Wall of China was built to withstand any kind of human assault, but in the first few years of its existence China was invaded, not by force but by simply bribing the guards at the gates. The builders of the wall had provided for every contingency except human weakness. So the greatest frontiers in history are before you, in the human heart.

Prerequisites of Success

Yours will be the responsibility of blazing new spiritual trails and establishing new social patterns—never an easy task. I remember from my childhood the mud roads we were forced to use before the advent of modern highways. There were usually just two ruts down the center of the road, worn there by the wheels of traffic day after day. Once you got into them, it was very difficult to get out. Over one road was a sign, "Choose your rut well. You will be in it for the next twenty miles." That was literally true. There are ruts, too, across the face of our world—ruts of narrow nationalism, prejudice and selfishness. It has been much easier for each succeeding generation to follow them than to blaze new trails. After the First World War, we made a feeble attempt to establish a new pattern of peaceful living. But we were not ready. We soon settled back into the comfortable ruts of isolationism and nationalism, which soon led to the same disaster. Now, after a second and more terrible war, your generation is once again given the opportunity to change the pattern of human relationships by international cooperaton.

I wonder if we will once again fall back into the same tragic ruts of the past. Once we settle into a rut, we are not free to choose our destination. We go where the rut takes us. We are never free to choose between war and peace. We are only free to choose between the roads that lead to war and the roads that lead to peace. If we take the ruts of nationalism, racial and cultural arrogance, and selfishness, already our destination of disaster is chosen for us. If we can build roads of cooperation

and understanding and sacrifice, we may have a peaceful world.

I wonder if you have enough of the spirit of faith and self-sacrifice to blaze these new trails across the face of the earth—to be pioneers of the new frontiers. Patriotism, for example is for most people little more than waving a flag, or marching in a parade, or enlisting in military service when our country calls. Do you have the courage to give patriotism a new meaning—not just to die for our country, but to live to make her not only strong but righteous as well? Can you dare to see that even above loyalty to our own nation there must be a devotion to God and to all humanity? Back in 1860, a man from my home state said: "I am first of all a citizen of Harford county, then a citizen of Maryland, then a citizen of the United States." How ridiculous that sounds to us now. We have moved to a new concept of citizenship. Will you be willing to extend this concept of citizenship even farther by saying in the spirit of the true pioneer: "I must first of all be a citizen of the world. My primary allegiance I owe to God and my fellow men everywhere"? It is on this new frontier of international-mindedness that peace must be won.

Basic Principles

Our American democracy is founded upon the principle that every man should be accepted for what he is and what he can do, regardless of his color or creed or position. We are all painfully aware of our ruthless disregard of this great ideal in too much of our everyday practice. When men are ruled by their prejudices, "liberty and justice to all" is little more than a slogan that mocks us with our own national hypocrisy. It will take the courage of some great pioneers in this half-century to make democracy really work in our social order, not only here but across the world. On these new frontiers, your generation must make the seed of those glorious concepts of our American heritage bloom into full reality.

Being the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth, we have for the most part accepted our good life in America as part of our birthright. Until recently, at least, the pitiful plight of so much of the rest of the world has given us little concern. But now we are beginning to see that a world half slave and half free cannot endure—nor a world half fed and half starved. Our fate is bound up with the fate of men everywhere. There will be no freedom for us unless we seek the same good for all men everywhere, even at the cost of personal sacrifice. Every fruit-grower knows that his own orchard, no matter how carefully he sprays it, is never free from the danger of parasites and blight so long as his neighbor does not spray his trees. So, in order to protect his own, he must spray his neighbor's trees also. He has learned a new commandment: Thou shalt spray thy neighbor as thyself. It will take some courageous pioneering to bring the world to accept the simple truth of Jesus, "If you want to save your life you must lose it." On these frontiers of concern for the well-being of men everywhere the battle for peace will be fought, not with guns but with food and mutual aid, with love and understanding.

For Such a Time As This

Never has a graduating class faced more serious problems which call for such a deep sense of consecration to a task. I am confident that you have within yourselves the stuff of which real pioneers are made. I think of another young man who lived almost two thousand years ago. He realized long before his time where the world's real unconquered frontiers lay. He gave his life to blaze new trails across the lives of men. He believed that love was stronger than hate and that right would triumph over might. He knew that the way to peace and happiness was to be found in devotion to God and good will toward all men, and that the fullest realization of human joy came through self-sacrifice. The world has never been the same since he passed this way. He was indeed the Prince and the Pioneer, and he calls you still to follow him.

Do you remember those stirring words of Walt Whitman in his poem "O Pioneers"? They might have been written for you at this moment, so clearly do they sound the summons to the spiritual adventure of your generation:

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers! . . .

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the sea
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
Pioneers! O pioneers! . . .

Till with sound of trumpet,
Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I hear it wind,
Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your places,
Pioneers! O pioneers! . . .

The frontiers of the new life are before you, and you are indeed its pioneers. God be with you in your quest!

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

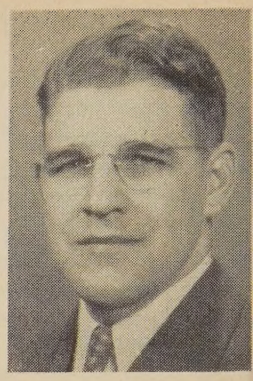
JAMES P. WILBOURN, Clarksburg Baptist, W. Va. "How Can I Thank God Enough?" I Thes. 3:9—*How can I thank God enough for you?*

ROY H. BROWN, Pasadena Presbyterian, Pasadena, Calif. "The God Who Answers by Fire." I Kings 18:24—*The God who answers by fire, he is the real God.*

ARTHUR PACKMAN, United Church of Canada, Emsdale, Ont. "Displaced Persons." Is. 55:1—*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters . . .*

(*Continued on page 11*)

By Francis C. Wilson



The Tragedy of Absalom

O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! II Samuel 18:33.

THE king waited impatiently in his makeshift military outpost. He was waiting for news from the front. To the north a few miles away raged bitter fighting and the fate of a nation rested upon its outcome. But to the king it meant more than the fate of a nation. He was concerned about his son. For it was the son's first taste of war and the king, like any father, was terribly worried about his safety.

It was a fierce battle. Twenty thousand men had already been slaughtered by the sword. Company after company of crack troops, the king's finest, had marched into the fray, only to be mowed down by the superior skill of veteran fighters.

Back in camp, the king paced anxiously to and fro, obviously upset and unnerved. Suddenly a shout went up. A courier, running at top speed, was seen approaching headquarters, and several hundred yards behind him was a second messenger. The first man dashed up to the king, prostrated himself, and blurted out, "All is well."

The king breathed a sigh of relief. It was a victorious day after all. The loyal forces had won. But that was not the most important thing. "Is the young man Absalom safe?" The courier, still breathing deeply from his long dash, looked away. "There was a great tumult, sir, but I know not what it was."

'He's Dead'

By this time the second courier had come up. The king roared in anger, "Never mind the battle. What about Absalom?" A silence, then slowly the dreaded answer: "He's dead."

The king turned away and buried his face in his arms. Tears flowed down his face and his words were hardly understandable above the sobs in his voice. "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Here is perhaps the most heart-breaking scene in all human history—a father weeping for his slain son. It is the black ending of a sad tragedy, one which has become a universal experience in the life of the human race. The king in this story is, of course, David, Israel's greatest leader and her never-to-be-forgotten hero. The son is Absalom. Those who actually killed the son were the king's most trusted soldiers under the personal command of the king's great general and friend, Joab. To old Joab the death of Absalom, even against the king's express command, was the inevitable end of a bad situation. For Absalom had plunged Israel into bloody civil war, seeking to wrest the throne from his father.

Familiar Tragedy

It is the tragic story of a misguided son who had everything in the world he wanted—except his father's companionship. It is the tragic story of a great public leader whose military prowess and political astuteness had brought glory to his people as well as vast wealth and power to himself. He was a father who possessed everything his heart desired—except the love and respect of his son.

The tragedy of Absalom is the tragedy of a broken home, where misdirected generosity and indulgence brought unhappiness, ruin and death. It is the story of a father too busy to be a pal to his boy, and of a boy who never knew his father as his dad.

It is a familiar story. David was a great king and an able administrator. He welded his people into the solidarity of a united kingdom, and lifted the nation to a place of power and respect in the world of his day. He ruled wisely and well, and under his guiding hand Israel became great. But to be a successful political leader is not necessarily to be a good father. In David's case, greatness ended at the threshold of private life.

The son, Absalom, was the product of parental neglect. He was a handsome lad—"in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty. From the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." But Absalom never learned that "beauty is as beauty does." He lived in a world of utter selfishness and self-gratification. From the very beginning, he was, in the slang vernacular of our day, a "spoiled brat," ruined by the fond indulgence of absentee parents and taught by petty experience that the most important thing in life was to get what he wanted. As a youth, he "ran around" with the wrong crowd, free always to

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FRANCIS C. WILSON, pastor of Epworth Methodist, Worcester, Mass., was a journalist before entering the ministry. Especially interested in American church history, he serves as vice-president of the New England Methodist Historical Society. This sermon is particularly appropriate for Fathers Day, June 17.

do as he wished and go as he desired. Soon he became the tool of political opportunists and the center of a conspiracy to take the throne from his father by force. And the Scriptures tell us that "Absalom stole the hearts of all Israel." He wooed the people into believing that their lot would be easier and more prosperous under him than under the iron hand of David.

Civil war spread and the king was forced to abandon Jerusalem. Loyalist forces were organized, and in Ephraim's wood they met the rebels led by Absalom in decisive battle. King David's orders to General Joab were precise: defeat the revolutionists and restore order in the nation, but see to it that his Absalom is not harmed. "Deal gently for my sake with the young man." The rebels were finally routed. Absalom, riding a mule in flight, was caught in the low branches of a tree, where Joab's men found him. The general knew full well his king's wishes regarding the safety and security of his son, but he was versed also in the ways of political intrigue. He knew that the stability of the kingdom demanded a swift and conclusive end to the rebellion. As long as Absalom lived, still under the influence of crafty political opportunists, there was danger to the well-being of the nation. So Joab disregarded the order of his king and commanded the death of the king's son.

An Interesting Comparison

And now David, the father, is brokenhearted. "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Compare this poignant scene with another in the Old Testament. Joseph is in Egypt, the efficient civil administrator for Pharoah. His brothers, who had "sold him down the river" because of their jealousy, had come from distant Palestine to buy corn to help tide them over a great famine in the north. Little do they realize that the high official is their own brother. But Joseph knows his brothers, and by a ruse detains Benjamin, the youngest. Judah, one of the older brothers—the very one who had first suggested the plot to sell Joseph into slavery—now stands to plead with all his might for the safe return of Benjamin on the ground that Jacob their father would be heartbroken if his youngest and favorite son did not come home with the party. Judah's plea is an eloquent one. He has one argument only: "My father's life is bound up in the lad's life." It would kill the old man if the son did not return safely. Jacob was a far better father than David because he was "wrapped up" in the life of his son.

Father's Job

The world today needs Christian fathers who are genuinely engrossed in the lives of their sons. No other human relationship is quite the same as that between a boy and his dad. When that relationship is normal and happy, to every son his dad is the "greatest guy" in the world, a hero and a real pal.

The pattern of a boy's life is more often than not set by the kind of dad he has. His attitudes towards honesty, truthfulness, fair play, sportsmanship, religion, the church—all are largely determined by his relationship with his father and by the attitudes of the father in these areas of human experience.

All too often fathers leave to their wives the job of providing their sons with the proper moral, spiritual and cultural training. In many instances, what they really do in this sidestepping their responsibility is to teach the wrong attitudes by default.

Many fathers neglect their sons because they are unwilling to find time for creating a real sense of companionship with their sons. Fathers ought never to be too busy to spend at least some time with their sons. During the hectic days of the Civil War, an important session of the President's cabinet was interrupted by Tad Lincoln, who rushed into the room to speak to his father. Secretary Stanton became furious and ordered the boy to leave, saying, "Don't you know your father doesn't have time to see you right now? He is busy." Whereupon Mr. Lincoln quietly rebuked his secretary of war: "Sir, I always have time to see my son." No father has a right to be forever too busy to be a pal to his son and to share in his growing life.

Someone has said that every person is really three persons: the person he is, the person he would like to be, and the person he could have been. I think every true father seeks for his son to be a better person than himself, a combination of the person the father wanted to be and the person he could have been had he used every opportunity life opened for him.

No task is more noble and more satisfying than to be the father of a growing boy, to plant in that young life the seeds of strength and courage and faith.

This world of ours has many needs in these times, but none so great as the need for more fathers who are real dads to their sons, and for more sons who are like their fathers.

Titles and Texts

(*Continued from page 9*)

JOE R. KENNEDY, First Christian, Omaha, Neb. "Must We Always Have Wars to Maintain our Freedom?" Acts 22:28—*And the chief Captain answered, 'With a great sum obtained I this freedom.' And Paul said, 'I was born free.'*

KENNETH B. WENTZEL, St. Andrew's Evangelical & Reformed, Mishawaka, Ind. "The Pessimistic Optimist." Isaiah 21:12—*The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire yet: return, come!*

HARRY T. BRIDWELL, Central Church of Christ, Buffalo, N. Y. "Screening Our Tendencies." Lamentations 3:40—*Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.*

This is the second in a series of four sermons on the general subject "The Psychology of Religious Living," preached by GASTON FOOTE, pastor of Grace Methodist, Dayton, Ohio. Dr. Foote is the editor of the recently published volume Communion Meditations (*Abingdon-Cokesbury*).

Life Is What You Make It

By Gaston Foote

What is your life? James 4:14.

WHEN the historian H. G. Wells died in 1946, many of the newspapers reporting the event quoted the last words he ever spoke. Friends and nurses were fluttering about his bedside trying to be helpful, adjusting pillows, pulling up the covers, administering sedatives, and so on, when Wells turned to them and said: "Don't bother me. Can't you see I'm busy dying?" It was the last flicker of humor from a very gallant spirit.

I realize it is not a very cheerful thought to be throwing in the face of a congregation, but the fact is that we begin this process of dying the moment life begins. We can be cheered by the reflection that we have at least ten more years of life than our grandfathers had. Some time ago I was greatly encouraged by the news that a Russian physician had discovered a magic elixir that, if taken three times a day after meals (shake well before using), would guarantee a hundred and fifty years of life. After having begun to lay my plans accordingly, however, I read that the Russian had died in his early sixties.

Let us do something more important today than discuss life's length. Let us discuss what we can do with it. This is indeed a great time to be alive. Lewis Mumford was not far wrong when he said that these past fifty years of history were more significant than the previous thousand years. So amazing, so baffling, so radical have been the changes wrought in the last two generations that, keeping up with life's gadgets, we lose life's goal. James, in our text this morning, asks this significant question: "What is your life?" Well, what is life and what can we do with it?

There are really three things a man can do with his life. Let us examine them briefly.

I

Man can run from life. Men have been doing it, or trying to do it, since the days of Jonah. The book of Jonah is a great little book, as modern as tomorrow's newspaper. Jonah is history's stellar performer when it comes to fleeing from life's hard responsibilities. God told him to go east to fulfill life's assignment, but he preferred to go west, long before the days of Horace Greely.

Modern Jonahs assume that they can run away from life. Peer Gynt, one of the characters in an Ibsen drama, consistently refused to face a difficulty. He sought to go around it, over it or under it; but he always ran into more difficulty dodging duty than he would have met had he had the courage to face life in the first place. You can't run away from life because the world is round, and if you go far enough you come back to where you started.

Men have devised many ways of trying to run away from life's hard tasks and exacting responsibilities. The first I shall mention is rationalization. Rationalization is the process of getting your system of reason to sustain you in the action you desire to take. It operates when a man "reasons with himself" rather than with the facts. He assumes that he doesn't have time for worship on Sunday because his job is difficult and his frail body needs the seventh day to rest in bed. This may be perfectly true, but what we have done is to make the facts contribute to our desires. The truth is the person wanted to stay in bed anyway. Or the housewife assumes that cooking her husband's meals and keeping the house is unimportant because he is seldom there, never notices the house and seems to like such food as is set before him. The probable truth is that she doesn't like to cook or keep house. Rationalization is a back door of escape from the responsibilities of life.

Another escape mechanism is romance. It is a door of escape from life's realities to life's fantasies. The reason some people are miserable outside of a movie house or a highly romantic novel is that they refuse to put real romance into their own lives, preferring to live for the duration of the movie or the novel in a dream world. Refusing to face the facts of their own unromantic life, people prefer to project themselves in imagination across the stage until they take the part of a Romeo or a Juliet. They become playboys or butterflies, never learning to grapple with facts. It is great to have dreams; we cannot live without them. But if they are to become real we must do something more than romance about them. We must build constructively so that our dreams may become realities.

A third escape mechanism is rum. Alcoholism is now considered a way of escape by a host of people who have never been conditioned to face life in the first place. A pampered young lady faces the responsibilities of running a household, for which she has never been trained, and seeks escape in alcohol. A young man, coddled by a

doting mother, finds that his will clashes too frequently with that of his wife and goes to the near-by tavern to forget his troubles. Dr. Charles R. Brown told of a man who lived in Hoboken, New Jersey, who said he drank because it was the only way a poor man could get out of Hoboken for a few hours at a time. Many people use alcohol not to be mean or trifling, but to escape the real issues of life. Of course, one never drinks himself out of trouble. When he sobers up the problems are there waiting for him.

Still another mechanism whereby we seek to escape life is some form of illness. There are those who "enjoy poor health," who have habituated themselves to this method of escaping life's demands. But there are also many people who, when the burdens become heavy and the tension tightens, actually become ill, first in mind, then in body, because in this way they can honorably postpone a pressing decision. There is truth in the story of the man who wrote to a friend telling him how much he was overworked and how he was going to have a nervous breakdown when warm weather came. He had planned an illness as a way of escape.

A man came to a minister's office not long ago seeking advice. He had been let out of a responsible position in industry, could not find another position of like responsibility and was daily being besieged by headaches. The truth was, he was not satisfied to take a less important position which was offered him because it would deflate his ego, and his fear of dropping in importance in the business world was giving him nervous headaches. When he secured the consent of his mind to take the position offered him, his headaches vanished. He had sought escape from life through illness.

The last and most desperate method of escape from life is suicide. It is the route some thirty thousand people take each year. Some years ago a local theater guild put on Sutton Vane's play "Outward Bound," which deals with a group of people thrown together on a ship sailing between life temporal and life eternal. Scrubby, one of the characters, had escaped life by suicide. In referring to it he said, "We are the people who ought to have had more courage to face life."

Well, this is one way to deal with life—try to run away from it. While it is futile, hosts of people are trying it.

II

Consider a second thing you can do with life. You can run with life. This is the most common danger for all of us—the danger of being swayed by the herd instinct. Too many of us arrive at our fundamental convictions through the vote of the majority. It is one thing to believe in the spirit of democracy. It is quite another to believe that the majority is always right. The contrary is more often true. We Americans dislike the ritual of kneeling to kings and potentates, but we continuously bow to two great sovereigns—General Average and Majority Vote.

It is doubtless true that the best government is arrived at by the vote of the majority. But *truth* is never arrived at by majority opinion. Majority opinion in the day of Copernicus held that the sun moved around the earth. Yet the majority was wrong; Copernicus was right. Majority opinion in the days of Louis Pasteur scoffed at "invisible disease germs." Yet the majority was wrong; Pasteur was right. Majority opinion condemned Wilberforce, who fought against human slavery, as a firebrand. Yet the majority was wrong; Wilberforce was right.

Suppose you asked the people to vote on what constituted great music. In one category you have bebop and ragtime; in the other, Chopin's nocturnes and Brahms' lullabies. In some areas of America at least, bebop and ragtime would win hands down. Put to popular vote the merits of a sentimental movie over against the plays of Shakespeare. In all probability majority opinion would be on the side of the movie. The idea that the voice of the people is the voice of God is not true. Forty million Frenchmen *can* be wrong; likewise a hundred million Americans.

Undoubtedly the easiest way to arrive at one's moral convictions is through the voice of the majority. What is the proper attitude toward drinking? If we let the people answer we arrive at the cocktail hour and an occasional spree in the land of inebriacy. What is the proper attitude toward morality? Hollywood would probably say that indissoluble unions of love and mutual fidelity are out of date. Is not this a day of freedom, including sexual freedom, and are not occasional extramarital liaisons in order? It is so easy to drift with public opinion. Yet public opinion is the highest standard of life some people have.

Historians have rightly called Christians a peculiar people. Christ refused to conform to the world; rather he sought to transform the world. No doubt the easiest way of life is the way of conformity. No one likes to be put in a minority position; there is great temptation to make the vote unanimous. But the genius of Christianity is not in its conformity, but in its transforming power. Had Christianity conformed it would have died in the first century. Those who have stood out above the crowd, who have defied the status quo, who have stood against intrenched greed and injustice have been the leaders of history. Christians have been a peculiar people. They have refused to run with life. Rather they have sought to change the very course of life itself.

The great danger to the church today is compromise. Drifting with the crowd is such a pleasant experience. It is dangerous because it is often an unconscious process. Had Dr. Jekyll realized how increasingly easy it was for him to become Mr. Hyde, he might have taken warning and saved himself. But he was not aware of his danger. Look in your own life at those great landmarks along the shore, those great ideals for which you have stood. Are you slipping by them? Are you as devoted to the principle of honesty as you were ten years ago? Or has the competitive race for

fortune dulled your sense of integrity? And what of your pledge to sobriety? Has the opinion of the majority done something to your ideal? What of your vow of chastity, of purity of thought and act? Has the opinion of the world beaten you down to a position of compromise?

Drifting with the current is the line of least resistance. Dead fish always drift downstream. Only the living salmon climb the waterfalls. Are we physically alive, yet spiritually dead? To drift in one's spiritual life ultimately means death to the soul. The story is told of an adventurous young man in a canoe above Niagara Falls. He sought to defy danger by drifting toward the rapids. Friendly voices warned him of his danger, but he relied on his great strength and his prowess at the oars. When he finally set himself to escape the rapids it was too late. Drifting with the current had wrought his doom.

Don't be a drifter,
Breast the stream,
And struggle for a worthy dream.
Be one of those with standards high,
Who dare to do and dare to try.
Too many merely drift along,
Hopeless when danger's winds grow strong;
Crushed by rocks they might evade,
Were they not too lightly swayed.

III

There is a third thing you can do with life. You can take hold of it positively; you can run it! We have an expression "taking the bull by the horns," which is quite a legitimate if not a literary term. It means that we shall not lie down and let life run over us, but that we shall stand up to life and wrestle with it. We can attack life, take the offensive, get in the driver's seat and be the master.

This involves purposeful living. If we believe that God lives, we must believe that he has a plan. He could not have created us without purpose. If God has a master plan for the world he has a master plan for our lives, a plan that is distinctly ours. If the lines on our fingertips are different from the lines of all other people on earth, surely the plan for our lives is distinctly our own. Tennyson said, "I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs."

The first novel that Lloyd Douglas wrote was one of his best. The title was "One Increasing Purpose." It was the story of a young man who could not quite understand that his life had a purpose until he found himself in a ministry of healing. Thereafter he bent all his interests in this direction and became a great surgeon. You never find yourself until you find the purpose life holds for you.

Some years ago I asked a medical missionary in the Belgian Congo about the supply of doctors and nurses in a village of some 50,000 pepole. He said there was no doctor there at all. There were two overworked nurses and a hospital with some twenty beds. A neighboring doctor visited only once a week. "A doctor in that village," he said, "could save 10,000 lives that will otherwise die." That's a worthy ambition for some young man. There are areas in the world where a trained nurse could save the lives of 5,000 babies that will otherwise die. That's a worthy ambition for someone. Take hold of life; set a goal and bend all efforts to reach it.

Taking hold of life involves discipline. He who wastes time wastes life. Some say they do not have time for this or that. Not so! We have as many hours in our day as any other person. We must learn to use them intelligently, planning our days with skill. Learn to discipline yourself so you will properly use your time. The gift of time is not to be wasted—it is to be used.

We must discipline our minds. Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." The difference between the man who knows and the blockhead is largely a matter of the discipline of the mind. We can find great nuggets of truth, not on the surface of superficial thinking, but as we dig deeply into the experiences of the human race. This requires study, the regimenting of the mind to do our bidding.

If our buried talents ever emerge it will be because we have applied ourselves through discipline to the tasks before us. Paderewski said, "Before I was master, I was slave." Yea, every master in any art knows that success means discipline of body, mind and spirit. Take hold of life; don't be mastered by it; be master of it.

Taking hold of life involves not only purpose and discipline, it involves dedication. One of the strange paradoxes of Christianity is this: You can best take hold of life as you surrender your life to the Master of life. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall lose his life, for my sake, shall find it." Paul became the master of his life when he surrendered it and became the greatest missionary to the Gentiles. Livingstone became the master of life when he gave his life to God and went to Africa a century ago as a missionary. Long ago George Matheson said:

Make me a captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall conquerer be.

I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand;
Imprison me in thy mighty arms,
And strong shall be my hand.

Three things you can do with life. You can run from it—but you will never be successful. You can run with it—but you will ultimately be defeated. You can run it, be master of it! This alone is victory.

The technique for triumph in this world is not the technique of struggle but the technique of submission—submission to the divine will.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain at the University of Chicago.*

The Victory Has Been Won

By Gordon A. Stoltz

It came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Luke 24:51-53.

THESE are strange words to associate with a farewell. A few weeks previously at the cross, the disciples demonstrated the sorrow, the heartbreak and frustration that parting can leave in its wake. What had brought about the change? What had put a song into broken hearts, a sense of victory where a short time before there was nothing but defeat?

The miraculous change wrought in the disciples came when the resurrection events revealed without a doubt that he who was Jesus, their friend and Master, was also Christ, the Son of God, the Lord of lords. They now knew that "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive." He had won the victory over the forces of evil. And —what was vitally important to them—that victory was also theirs through faith in him.

The power that wrought this change in the hearts of those disciples was the same power that changed the Pharisee Saul into the Christian missionary Paul. It was the power that gave courage to the early Christians to live and, if necessary, to die for their convictions. It is the power which through the centuries has sustained the forces of truth in the face of demonic evil. It is the only power which can continue to hold high the banner of righteousness today in the face of the challenges, threats and maneuvers of evil. Only faith in the risen, victorious Christ can release this power in the life of the individual and the church.

I

The resurrection, the ascension and Pentecost gave the disciples a new appreciation of the past, the present and the future. Their Scriptures took on new meaning. The symbolic rites and sacrifices of their religion had new significance in the light of the life, suffering and death of Christ. Such facts as the angels' song, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," and the words of John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," were precious in the light of Christ's victory.

Words spoken by Jesus became saving truth. "I am the good shepherd . . . the bread of life . . . the Way, the Truth and the Life." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." As the disciples recalled these and other sayings of Jesus, new life and power came into their lives. He was the Messiah! He had died for them! He had conquered for them!

We can understand why Christ's followers wrote as they did. Paul could say with conviction, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." "Oh death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Peter recorded, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." John on Patmos saw Christ in a vision as "King of kings and Lord of lords." He heard him say, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." John heard the voices in heaven sing of Christ. "Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation."

Christians since Bible times have agreed with the spirit and conviction of triumph expressed by Charles Wesley's hymn:

Jesus, the Savior, reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice; again I say, rejoice!

His Kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are unto Jesus given;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice; again, ye saints, rejoice!

GORDON A. STOLTZ is pastor of College Hill Moravian, Bethlehem, Pa. Born in Calgary, Alta., Canada, Mr. Stoltz received his degrees from Moravian College and Theological Seminary. He previously served pastorates in North Dakota and Illinois.

Here is faith—not in a hero, a martyr, a great teacher, our model, but in the Son of God who lived among men, died for them, conquered the forces of evil once and for all so that all who trust in him might have the victory!

II

This is our eternal message. Our Christ lives, conqueror of death and the devil. Here is the foundation of our hope and faith. From this point in time when God lived among men and conquered for them, all history is understood and judged. We do not look forward to some future revelation from God for victory, as do the Jews. Nor, as Christians, is our central point of hope based upon some future eschatological expectation. Christ, the cross and the resurrection are the basis of our hope. Easter signifies Satan's defeat. Our redemption has been won, once and for all! We have the firstfruits of this victory in the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the church. If we come to Jesus with the Baptist's question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus answers, "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

The Resurrection defeated the visible and invisible powers of evil. Their apparent powers today are limited by the victory of Christ. After this present time, even these will be completely destroyed. Oscar Cullmann in his book *Christ and Time* compares the defeat of Satan by Christ through the cross and resurrection to the decisive battle in a war. That battle is the turning point. There may be ups and downs, there will be fierce skirmishes, but the final victory is assured. We are in a mopping-up period which has its sacrifices and hardships, but there is no question about the outcome. The victory is God's already! What has been said of the British can in this instance be much more positively stated of God in Christ: "They may lose some battles, but they win the war!"

We Christians ought to be more optimistic in our day. We ought to be more militant in the cause of Christ. The forces of evil, which seemingly are gaining so many victories, will be seen in the long view to be engaged in minor skirmishes. They will join the ranks of the nazis and their kin in final defeat. Victory is ours as long as we are with him who is Victor!

III

However, this faith in God's victory leaves no room for the believer to sit back and shirk responsibility. He is an important instrument in the hands of God and can by his indifference be a delaying factor, or by doing God's will be a means toward that ultimate triumph. Thus Paul says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

As Cullmann so aptly puts it, "All 'ought' rests upon an 'is.'" If we believe the glorious truth that Christ "led captivity captive," then we who are holy should sanctify ourselves. We who have received the Spirit ought to walk in the Spirit. We who have been redeemed from the power of sin ought to fight sin. We who are the children of God through Christ, certainly ought to heed his command: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

FATHER'S DAY

A Sermon for Children
by Ralph C. Lankler

THE Christian church has done much to honor and exalt Mary the mother of Jesus. Many pictures have been made of Mary, many poems written and hymns sung about her. But the earthly father of Jesus has not received much attention. There are many who do not even know his name.

Being a father, I can see why mothers should be honored by their children more than their fathers are honored. A mother gives more care, comfort and consideration to the children. Dad works to provide the home, the food and the clothing. He pays the bills and makes the repairs around the house. There are times when he comes home from work ready to play with his children, but they are either too busy or too tired, or they have to do their lessons or go to bed. A father loves his children just as much as a mother does, although he may not be able to show it as often or as clearly.

The Christian church may give more prominence to the mother of Jesus, but Jesus gave equal attention to his father, Joseph. He worked with his father in his carpentry shop. He went to the synagogue with his father, because Jewish women in those days were not allowed the same privilege of worshiping and studying religion as men. Jesus told a story of a loving father who had two sons, one good and one a "prodigal," a bad boy. Although the one son went wrong and did that which is evil, his father still loved him. Jesus taught by this story that God who is our Father in heaven loves us as his children.

If we think of God as being like our own earthly fathers, than we know that he provides for us and wants to help us. When we do anything wrong he will, like our earthly fathers, discipline us so that we may grow to be good men and women.

When you grow up I hope that you will be a good father or mother. I hope that you will treat your children and all children as you would like to have your Father in heaven treat you.

RALPH LANKLER, pastor of First Presbyterian, Cortland, N. Y., is author of Stories to Tell Children *(Revell, 1946), a book of children's sermons.*

A High School Commencement Prayer

By R. G. Riemann

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church,
Royal Oak, Michigan

ETERNAL source of life and light, who art the truth and whom to know and serve becomes our highest good: we give thee our thanks for every influence which has made possible this hour.

For the search for truth which drives us on to learn and do; for the restless longing for greater knowledge which speaks to us of our kinship with thee who art the source of knowledge; for the memory of the past which has created for us a heritage of freedom; for the vision of the future which would make freedom the possession of all men—for these we express to thee our gratitude.

May thy benediction abide richly upon all who are here associated in instruction, in study and in administration to the end that each succeeding generation may be here equipped to serve its day, in loyalty to that which is true and in devotion to that which is for the common good of all.

Especially do we pray thee to be with those who will soon leave this school to meet the further demands and urgencies of life—demands and urgencies which will test all that they have here acquired of mental and spiritual power to resist the wrong and achieve the right.

May the memory of parental love hold them steady; may the associations here formed be a strong support to them in their hours of crisis; may a sense of the comradeship of Christ enable them to render worthy service.

We pray not that life shall be for them an easy road, but rather do we pray that strength may be theirs—strength of body to perform the tasks of life, strength of mind to seek the way of life, and strength of soul to discover the fullness of life.

May they join us and those who have been their comrades and instructors here in using every talent, every power, every sympathy in the service of a humanity and a world which needs them.

Empower and enable them and us to dare to believe in thee, in ourselves and in our fellow men.

Keep them and us from the prejudice which cripples thought, the pride which destroys action, and the cynicism which kills the soul. Keep them and us humble in spirit, courageous in days of testing, faithful in times of stress.

We pray in the name and trust in the spirit of him whom we own as Master and Lord, even Jesus Christ thy Son, our Savior. Amen.

Pulpit Post

That Scotford Article

SIR: I like the new Pulpit, especially Dr. Scotford's article in the March issue. But why—oh, *why*—say he "pastored" churches in Oklahoma, etc. Must a journal, to be contemporary, be as Time-ly as that?

Commission on Christian Social Action,
Evangelical and Reformed,
Cleveland, Ohio.

HUBER F. KLEMME,
Executive Secretary.

SIR: Noting John R. Scotford's statement as to Ralph Sockman "who scintillates for the benefit of the intelligentsia": my wife and I are not notably highbrow, but we get up rather early on Sunday morning, by Pacific coast time, in order to hear Dr. Sockman's broadcast at 7:00 a.m. (before breakfast). Not long ago Dr. Sockman preached most effectively to clergy and laity in important interchurch meetings in Berkeley.

Berkeley, Cailf. E. H. TIPTON.

SIR: Scotford's article was unworthy of a publication like The Pulpit. He does not make clear what constitutes "great preaching." The opening paragraph would indicate that he makes it synonymous with a minister's drawing power. Thus such phrases as "two thousand people to listen to Gunsaulus," "four lines of people waiting to hear Fosdick." Such an interpretation of "great preaching" is in itself open to serious debate. But let us look at the argument on the level of the article.

The second paragraph castigates—with attempted humor which is unfunny—two New York clergymen—Sockman and Peale. Undoubtedly there are others who will write in defense of Sockman. It is becoming fashionable for relatively unknown ministers to take an urbane attitude toward Peale.

I do not know by what authority Scotford states that neither Sockman nor Peale is a "household word." That is a slippery phrase and he can weasel out on definition. Peale's mail averages 400 letters a day. It would be interesting to know what volume of correspondence the "great preachers" received.

Daniel A. Poling, who knows New York churches extremely well, has stated that since the days of DeWitt Tallmadge, "no clergyman has captured the imagination of New York audiences as has Norman Vincent Peale." Obviously Poling would not agree with Scotford's conclusion.

One final thought: there are also many "nostalgic" Democrats among the three to four thousand people who throng to the Marble Collegiate Church each Sunday.

First Presbyterian,
Akron, Ohio.

PAUL L. MCKAY.

(Dr. McKay was formerly associate minister of the Marble Collegiate Church.—THE EDITORS.)

SIR: When The Pulpit calls John Scotford's article, "No More 'Great' Preachers," "controversial," it mildly expresses my sentiments, for in my opinion Scotford presents a prosaic thesis in a most uncritical manner.

His thesis is prosaic because of the fact that it has been voiced time and time again not only concerning preachers but concerning other artists as well. "What has happened to our composers, our painters, sculptors, poets, and novel-

ists? Once we had them, now they have ceased to emerge," we say.

I daresay that fifty years from now we will hear the same cry, "No great preachers! But remember 1951 when so and so were in their prime? They were really great!"

First Congregational, CARLUS O. BASINGER.
Port Washington, Wis.

SIR: "May the defense speak?" "No More Great Preachers" causes me much concern, particularly when Ralph Sockman is characterized as one who "scintillates for the benefit of the intelligentsia." When Dr. Sockman comes to this town it is the common people who hear him gladly. The radio program which he presents is acclaimed by all, both public and radio people, as one of the finest religious broadcasts now on the air. There is not another man in America who commands the hearing Dr. Sockman does.

The great preachers are not all dead or retired. Their stature is still striking beside the run-of-the-mill, everyday preacher. But we run-of-the-mill preachers need a Dr. Sockman to show us the way to the heights of pulpit strength and renown.

Grace Methodist, WILLIAM J. OGLE.
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR: John Scotford is absolutely right. The day of "great preachers" is over. But the day of great preaching is here instead. Halford Luccock in his book *The Minister's Workshop* talks about preachers who are like meteors or shooting stars; they rise and fall with little consequence. If it were not for the solid preaching, week after week, by thousands of unnamed but not unimportant preachers the church would soon fail in our land.

Some will disagree with Scotford and point to other men like Paul Rees, Billy Graham, Harold Ockenga, and the Methodist Bishop of Ohio, Hazen Werner, as candidates who would continue the "great preachers" classification. We doubt if any men in our day would like the title, however. We hail the day of great preaching!

Union Church, DON R. YOCOM.
Farmer, Ohio.

SIR: If the word "great" were replaced by the word "oratorical" in John Scotford's article "No More Great Preachers," it would be more nearly correct. But to satisfy his line of thought, this writer, 40 years a pastor of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, would like to say that the answer may be in the improved quality of young ministers coming out of our seminaries, a fact which is undeniable in our denomination so far as I am concerned.

Christ Evangelical and Reformed, ACHILLES B. MEYER.
Houston, Tex.

Contemporary Preaching

SIR: I was a little depressed reading, in the April issue of The Pulpit, the contribution of Donald MacLeod in regard to "Contemporay Preaching." I can't see why our present-day preaching should seem so irrelevant to present problems. Neither could I find much enlightenment from the cure and remedy he offered. At the same time it was a great relief to find in the same issue two such urgent and up-to-the-minute sermons as "Saving Civilization" by G. S. Nichols and "Overcoming Fear" by A. J. Muste.

McGregor, Iowa. E. G. STEINMAN.

Anent 'strong statements'

SIR: Your "Thought for the Month" in the March issue is intriguing. Why are you so exercised over "the drift into subjectivism"? It also raises a "concern" that you make strong statements condemning vital work, apparently without being well informed concerning that work.

For example, is not the word "psychoanalysis" properly used to refer to a process that a minister would hardly have time to carry out, even granted that he had the skill and experience? As to ministers being "psychoanalysts," do you know whether clinical training programs for the clergy have emphasized the difference between the role of the pastor in counseling and the function of the medical specialist known as "psychoanalyst"?

As for ministers utilizing the insights that many psychoanalysts have discovered, there are some of us who would count our seminaries backward did they not help us to do this. To declare that utilizing such insights "produces more psychotic cases than it cures" is a statement that you obviously do not pretend to support, nor would you be likely to be able to substantiate it.

West Congregational, ROBERT LEE DUTTON.
Taunton, Mass.

From Dean to Dean

SIR: Liston Pope's article "Our Stagnated Preacher Training" (Jan.) was not hard reading. His points are well taken and obvious to anyone who has been in theological education for any length of time. My reaction is as follows:

1. The theological seminaries do admit as graduate students men with such academic records that they would be refused by our accredited medical school or law school. It is true also that we do not eliminate the lazy and stupid students as readily as do the other professional schools. On the other hand, we are improving, and the great increase in the number of applicants which began two years ago enables us to be a bit more selective. Frequently we meet the argument that a student who is low in seminary makes a great contribution in the pastorate. Here at McCormick there have been men who took an indifferent attitude toward the prescribed courses but still were rather brilliant and worked at other things.

2. While it is easier to stay in a seminary and eventually to be graduated than in another professional school, it is just as difficult to make high grades in a seminary as in one of the other schools. So we do turn out some capable scholars.

3. There have been many experiments in the manipulation of the theological curriculum. It was thought at Yale that Dean Weigle had said the last word. Then Dean Pope comes in and finds the need of change. Maybe because I am old and mellow and have seen many theological curriculums tried and found wanting, I am not so concerned about stagnation as is Dean Pope. After all, I don't think it unreasonable to expect the preacher to know something of the Bible, church history and theology. It is well for him to know the techniques of communication, counseling and group dynamics; but I believe that a religious background still is valuable. So I am not in favor of the scrapping of the old Zöchler-Hagenbach theological encyclopedia with its division into the biblical, historical, theological and practical fields.

4. It would be suicidal for us to think that we have arrived and to have no more experimentation. I have seen four waves in theological emphasis, each of which was thought by its proponents to be the answer to the quest for religious perfection: higher criticism, the social gospel, religious education, and the neo-orthodox theology. The first three made their contribution and then were deflated to normal dimensions; the fourth has passed its zenith. Ecumenicity has attracted a large following, but I don't believe that it claims to be more than a means.

In conclusion, I see the opportunity for improvement in our training of ministers. Still I have been heartened by the improvement in the quality of the young men coming to us and frequently I am gratified by visiting a young alumnus who is doing an effective job in ministering to his community. Generally he is fairly well satisfied with what he was taught in seminary and he realizes that there are things which he must learn by experience.

I have heard of teachers who began their courses by blowing the dust from their yellow notes and proceeded to expound the faith once for all delivered to the saints. I sat under one of them here at McCormick. But I know no such teachers today. It is a task for us to keep up in our fields and the students expect us to do it.

McCormick Theological Seminary, OVID R. SELLERS,
Chicago. Dean.

Reading for the Attic

By Gaius Glenn Atkins

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, the poet, once developed delightfully the conceit of the mind as a kind of receiving, processing and forwarding station on various levels, which indeed it is. On the ground floor it returns the intake little changed. It receives a fact and returns a fact. Or else, after a studious and accumulative period, it receives facts enough on the same level to make a book like the *Cambridge Modern History* or a page of footnotes to a line of German text. But essentially nothing is changed. You might call it the Peter Bell level where a yellow primrose is only a primrose—a good sensible Gradgrind kind of level on which the main businesses of life are conducted. There is a higher level where facts are examined, classified, made subject to laws and systems—perhaps the scientific level. Higher still, facts and experiences are processed into philosophies and perhaps theologies and returned in weighty and authoritative form.

But Holmes had mostly in mind the poetic level, where the intake, so to speak, is so changed as to be returned in another dimension of reality. This he thought the highest and most demanding use of the mind. For on this high level nothing is easily or quickly changed. Long processes of brooding are needed, and some peculiar genius which distinguishes the poet from those who have no power to lift observation or experience to such high and transmuting levels, or indeed to make them other than they are.

Holmes, as far as I can remember, did not much elaborate. His concern was with the transmutations of poetry, as when he himself found in the shell of the chambered nautilus a haunting symbol of the ascending soul, or as when Keats made his own timeless music out of a nightingale's song heard in English meadows. That in the main is what poets are for—to lift what life supplies to the high chambers of their own minds and make of it music and beauty.

The preacher shares that high office with the poet, and indeed with all artists, since it is the art of any artist to return what he receives, as far as his own art is concerned, upon the highest levels of truth and beauty. And I should think a preacher to be the freest of all artists to subdue any material to his own high uses; others abide our question—he is free.

This is particularly true of his reading. Doctors and lawyers can isolate, so to speak, their professional library. A preacher cannot. His library is a revelation of his interests, his extravagances, his curiosity, his visions and his quests. The shelves of his library are a watershed from whose confluent tributaries the currents of his preaching are fed, and he does not know himself from what high and hidden springs they issue. There are echoes of music whose singers he has forgotten in the very melody of his words. The prophets have touched his lips with live coals from their altars, and the wisdom of the sages supplies him wisdom. And yet always on one condition: that in some form or other he returns what he receives, other than he received it, and makes of it a fresh and flowing stream. It must be part of the creative processes of his mind and spirit, and through their action be put into circulation again.

There must be plenty of storage space in the mind, but unless what one puts into it can be taken out, it becomes a mental attic, crowded and maybe dusty. For there is one level of the mind which Holmes' analogy does not include. You might call it the mental attic, where one puts such usufruct of his reading for which he has no immediate use, nor indeed ever expects to have much use. Such reading, for example, as cannot by any possibility be used for homiletic purposes. Or else odds and ends of unrelated fact with which to make a show of erudition, if ever the occasion should arise. Once a fact, or even an idea, gets into the mental attic, it is very likely to stay there.

Of course even during a preacher's active period some of his reading goes into the attic, or at any rate into the less accessible storerooms of his mind. But the channels of communication are still open. Because, more than most, preachers use their reading directly or indirectly in their vocation, they are more sensible than most of the frustrations of stored-away reading. Reading is always central to a preacher. It may be marginal to an intelligent lay man and woman who have something else to do. There is a kind of reading that makes possible the fascinating "Have you read?" game, or stimulates clubs which live by an interchange of papers to the general advancement of culture. Reading is one phase of the social conduct of pleasantly cultured people, which is perhaps what it was meant to be. But we preachers, we keep our reading moving.

Naturally we look forward, in our retired years, to reading ourselves away to everlasting bliss. And generally and extravagantly we accumulate books to be read in that felicitious period when in a general way—besides writing things no editor is enthusiastic about publishing, and trying to get supply work—we have nothing else to do except read. (Unless we are fortunate enough to have a garden.) This, one may definitely call attic reading—when one has nothing particularly to do with what he reads except to get the books back to the library and store the substance away with little expectation now of ever using it. This writer has been doing that for a couple of years now. He would not say that the attic is getting crowded, since the failures of memory which go along with the attic-reading period rather correct overcrowding.

Socrates thought the invention of writing, which he blamed on the Egyptians, a misfortune. He thought it discouraged originality. He could not have foreseen how it was going to clutter up the world and our mental attics. Of course one can read things not worth taking up to the attic—only to the dump; as, for example, newspapers when you are through with them, too much current literature, indeed the larger part of the printed matter for which the country is being deforested. I am inclined to wonder sometimes under what urgencies we really do continue reading and what determines the lines we follow. The habits of a lifetime perhaps, tenacious association, unsatisfied curiosities, unfulfilled quests. But there are emancipations and compen-

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GAIUS GLENN ATKINS, retired Congregational pastor, is renowned for his literary achievements in the religious field. Author of several widely read books, he has served as editor of the Ministers' Quarterly *and has been a contributor to many religious journals.*

sations. One does not need to take world problems to the attic, or ponderous and speculative wisdoms—which frees one at least from disquieting categories. And, to press the conceit a little, one may choose, so to speak, what he thus takes to the attic. One is not apt to take current theological contentions. They begin to seem remote. Nor will he accumulate books about not being afraid, and how to stop worrying, and many other related things, all of which, being left behind, greatly lighten the burdens one carries up the stairs. The elimination of books one does not need to read any more is one of the four freedoms—or the fifth.

What we do take to the attic does I think reveal the set of our souls and our minds. And whatever is taken there suffers a kind of sea change. The poets one loves and whatever wisdoms one cherishes, somehow get a new value in the light from the attic windows, as though they should say, "Since you don't have to preach from us or about us any more, let us have a little quiet time together. We were never meant to be preached from anyway. Now that you do not need us to point a moral or furnish a quotation, you will be using us as we love to be used. Our music has always been sufficient in itself."

I find attic reading useful to fill out the gaps in earlier reading, and to make one careful about what one once did carelessly, and to see old friends in a new light and gain a little, before it is too late, some sure sense of proportion. Naturally one always takes one's older and earlier friends into the attic. One's desultory reading tends to fall into familiar pattern. One does not easily escape from the associations of the years.

One can see things detachedly in the attic, since the clamorous voices of the street do not reach so high. I wish I could say that attic reading comforts and assures. I know it sobers. History, for the most part, is sad reading, reporting the almost endless toil of Sisyphean nations pushing up armaments which roll back down upon them and never learning any better. At any rate, reading thus becomes a resource and not a utility, which perhaps it was never meant to be. One may, with a good conscience, put all the prospectuses of book clubs, sacred and secular, into the wastebasket.

Naturally there are haunting nostalgias. Preaching is, I think, of all vocations the hardest to relinquish. And if, in the attic, one senses a sermon, not likely ever to be preached, and feels some glow of former fires by which no one else will ever be warmed—well, there doesn't seem anything one can do about it. One will have a sense of rare comradeship. The wise and the good, for all that they sometimes made enduring uses of such reading, read also for their own pleasure, and if they had no other use for what they read, thereby enriched their own spirits. At best there was always a residue which they cherished and did not seek to communicate. Thus one will find that most of his friends in the attic shared in some form or other the same experiences, having within them what they could no longer express. And he may thus have friendly and understanding talk with them about the final issues of life and truth, as the light comes in from the western windows.

SERMONS for SPECIAL DAYS

THE AUTHOR

CHARLES M. CROWE, pastor of the Wilmette Parish Methodist Church, Wilmette, Illinois, has contributed to *Christian Century*, the *Pastor, Pulpit,* and other religious periodicals for many years. He is a regular speaker on the Mutual Network program "Faith in Our Time."

THE DAYS

NEW YEAR'S DAY
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
BROTHERHOOD WEEK
PALM SUNDAY
GOOD FRIDAY
EASTER
NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK
MOTHER'S DAY
STUDENT DAY
FATHER'S DAY
INDEPENDENCE DAY
LABOR DAY
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY
REFORMATION SUNDAY
TEMPERANCE WEEK
THANKSGIVING DAY
UNIVERSAL BIBLE SUNDAY
CHRISTMAS

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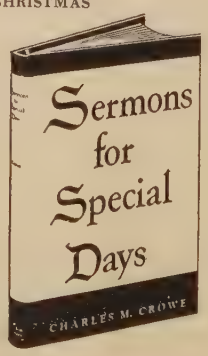

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St. Chrysostom, 8.8.8.8.8.8.

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Master divine, teach us to see
That life is best when lived with thee.

Thou art our Counselor and Guide,
And thou wilt save, what'er betide.
May no self-will keep us apart,
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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

On Beholding One's Face in a Mirror

RECENTLY I had a most embarrassing experience. It was in church. (But not in my own church: accordingly it will be quite useless for any reader to do any research in the hope of discovering gilt-edge evidence that I use this column to pan my own pastor.) To confess, without subterfuge or roundabout evasion, I fell fast asleep in the midst of the sermon. And according to my wife, who had been unable (or thought that she had been) to awaken me in any of those authoritative yet inconspicuous ways proper in the house of God—a surreptitious kick on the shins, a subtle yank of the coattail, a clearing of the throat in the well known pitch to which the ear of the partner of the years is accurately, if unconsciously, attuned, or a change of posture skillfully performed in such a wise as to shake the whole pew—my sleep had been sound, if only partially audible. It had not been deliberate; nevertheless I had, I can now see, invited my shame, for I had deliberately closed my eyes when the sermon was about eight minutes under way.

Not infrequently do I do that in chapel, for my pew is so situated that a combination of late afternoon sun and early Pullman stained glass often does things to me which no humble worshiper should be called upon to endure. This time, however, it was not the sun but the preacher who was to blame. He had that quality immortalized by Lewis Carroll when describing the Cheshire cat. He grinned intermittently but regularly at approximately the rate of once every 54 seconds—and for no reason at all so far as I could perceive, at least as long as I was in the condition to perceive anything. Watching for the advent the grin was like waiting for the next application of the starter to a neighbor's car stalled at midnight outside one's bedroom window. It had a compulsive power, but it prevented me from grappling with the homiletic argument. Hence, since his grin wouldn't fade, I closed my eyes the better to listen.

The next I knew, the final hymn was well under way. And my wife's description of my slumbers, round by round as it were: an increasingly pleasant expression of countenance, a gradual slumping to a position of greater comfort, a failure to bow my head for the prayer with which the sermon closed—this lasted well into the night. She did admit that there was a quality of pulpit tone—halfway between a yearning whine and a throaty sob—that was redolent of paregoric; but since she had obviously not succumbed, she was convinced that I did not need to either.

Now the object of this penitent and blushing confession—in addition to its value in filling half a column of space—is to plead with preachers to deliver at least one sermon every six months before a mirror and watch their faces. Many would, I am convinced, straightway repent and become better men. I am not urging that the pulpit is the place for a preternatural dead-pan expression, reminiscent of the wooden Indians who used to stand before cigar stores or of the poker players who, I am told, rode the Mississippi steamboats until recently. But the habitual grin—be it static or intermittent—is a burden which no man of God ought to ask any long-suffering congregation to bear.

Since there are a few more lines to go, I may voice a couple more pet peeves which I have accumulated through the years of watching pulpit manners, or the absence of them. The average parson, I am quite sure, is much annoyed by the whisperers in the pews. The sermon, not to mention the prayer, is no time for the interchange of confidences by garrulous worshipers. But good manners, like charity, should begin at home. My experience through the years has been that when two or three preachers are together in the pulpit, the odds are better than even that they will whisper and talk at various times while the lesser saints in the pews are supposed to sing and otherwise worship the Lord in the beauty of quietness. Cannot last-minute instructions to visiting clerics be given and received before the clerics arrive in the pulpit? Perhaps this is an occupational disease. At any rate, I have found that when a group of preachers are present, either at a so-called "preachers' meeting" or for what we love to style (with our fondness for nouns in the role of adjectives) a "worship service," they are usually conspicuous by their careless and rude disregard for what would seem the proprieties of the occasion. Because a man prays publicly at least 156 times a year is no reason for him,

(*Continued on page 25*)

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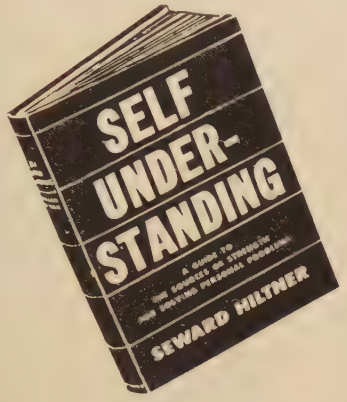

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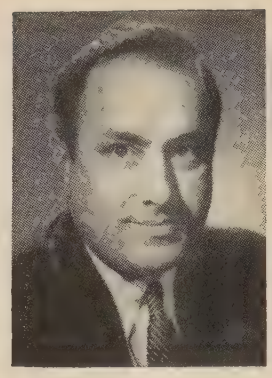

Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Church Music Should Be Enjoyed

CHURCH music should be enjoyed, not endured. This enjoyment should be twofold, shared by the singers and the listeners. What has often been said about preachers applies equally to singers: if, when the preacher has finished delivering his sermon, he is not tired, the congregation is! If the singing of an ancient chant becomes boring to both choir and people, then, like the offending eye, cut it out! Better enjoy a more tuneful composition than endure, under protest, the "ancient unisonous chant melody" of 13th century plainsong. Age cannot work a miracle of metamorphosis on these dirges of bygone centuries. They have their place in musical history, as Wycliff and Tyndale have theirs in the history of Bible translation. But a minister would not think of confining himself to these earlier translations of Sunday morning and ignoring the Revised Standard version of the New Testament. Neither should the choir limit itself to the honored ancients and ignore those who have built better on the ancients' noble foundation. Chanting, like blood-letting, had its day. Paul was hardly referring to choir specials when he urged his congregation to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ."

The devil should certainly not be allowed to have the best tunes, the best melodies or moods. The "spiritual" quality of a selection often inheres not in the music itself but in the organist's registration and interpretation. A skillful organist can play "April Showers" or "My Heart Cries for You" in a minor key, give it a stylish name, attach a series of unpronounceable Russian syllables thereto as the composer, and nine-tenths of the congregation will not know the difference. In fact, they won't care, so long as the music is enjoyable. Another organist may present artistically perfect fugues and theme-variations in such a manner as to bring discredit upon himself as well as the composer.

The better trained the minister, the easier it is to understand his sermons. He has acquired the happy faculty of reducing great, profound Christian truths to simple, understandable terms. So also the more highly trained the musician or director, the more should he be able to make the great music of the church come alive. The humblest layman should be able to understand and enjoy the music used in any worship service. Too often organists and choir directors forget that their responsibility is to the whole congregation, not just to a few musical highbrows. When that happens the pastor should step in and correct the situation by one means or another.

Church music, both choral and congregational, should unite, not divide. Yet the ecclesiastical battles waged over Isaac Watts' hymns centuries ago reverberate to this day. A recent news item regarding the proposed union of the Presbyterion Church, U.S., and the Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church states, "For years the A.R.P. sang only Bible psalms, while other Presbyterians sang all types of hymns. Under the new plan, the decision is left to the individual congregations." Walter Lingle, in an article in the *Christian Observer* of August 3, 1949, writes: "When the first Presbyterian General Assembly was organized in Philadelphia in 1789, Rev. Adam Rankin, although not a commissioner, rode all the way from Kentucky on horseback to make the following protest in the form of a question: 'Whether the churches under the care of the General Assembly have not, by the countenance and allowance of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, fallen into a great and pernicious error in the public worship of God by disusing Rous' version of David's Psalms, and adopting in its room Watts' imitation'?' Having asked the question, he addressed the Assembly at great length on the subject. He did not get much comfort from the Assembly but instead was admonished 'not to disturb the peace of the church on this head.'"

An equally heated controversy arose over the inclusion of Unitarian Sara Flower Adams' poem, "Nearer, My God, to Thee" in a church hymnal. "Over my dead body" was the phrase hurled by opponents of the hymn. Now, over their dead bodies, we sing this "old favorite," deeming it one of the few universally accepted hymns of the Church Ecumenical.

In the land down under, they are still at it. According to the Australian Methodist chronicle, the *Spectator* of January 1951, a song in the new *School Hymn Book of the Methodist*

Church is being criticized and ridiculed, and it threatens to cause another division. The offending lines are:

Let us remember the life in the street,
The horses that pass us, the dogs that we meet.

And so it goes. If it isn't the musician arguing for or against the use of "I Love You Truly," "Because" and Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" in the marriage ceremony, it is the minister or church member fighting for or against some supposedly heretical word or phrase in a hymn. God gave us music to unite, not divide!

Finally, church music should inspire, not depress. The gospel is "good news"; and good news, even against the blackest background, should make the believer rejoice. The glory of the Welsh hymn tunes consists in the fact that, while *Aberystwyth* and *Ton-Y-Botel* are written in a minor key, they are permeated with a note of triumph. Their minor strains never depress; they seem to be harbingers of ultimate victory.

The message and the music of our services should give the weary a needed lift, the sad a sense of joy, the lonely and defeated a "song in the night." Thus truly glorifying God, they bring peace to men of good will.

• *Reflectors of Christ*

SOME years ago when the Empire Exhibition was held at Johannesburg, South Africa, a peculiar technical hitch on the opening night caused many people to be disappointed. It had been planned that a 3,000-foot beam of light, cast by a 14 million candle-power beacon, would be thrown upon the sky. But no beam was to be seen, for the engineers had not taken account of the Johannesburg climate. The light was invisible because there was no humidity, no dust, no cloud for it to be reflected against. Light, unless it strikes an object, is invisible. Long ago the Light of the World came among us to enlighten every place where man is found. Yet even that Light is invisible unless it strikes an object—unless it is caught and reflected in the lives of his modern disciples. God grant that we may be faithful transmitters of the heavenly love.—*Bert Wright, Salem Methodist, Halifax, England.*

• *'What About Your Family Life?'*

A CERTAIN Chinese visitor was being shown the wonders of New York. They came to Grand Central railroad station, where at one spot there are six levels of transportation—for trains, streetcars, buses, subways, elevated, taxis—all heaped one on top of the other and interlaced with hundreds and hundreds of wires carrying electricity and telephone communications. The proud young American guide, after explaining it all, said, "This is the strength of America." After several moments' pause the Chinese visitor asked, "And if all this collapsed—what about your family life?"

No more searing question could be asked of the average American. What if all this collapsed? What about family life? Buzzing through those tombs at Grand Central are millions of Americans who have no true family life. They come by train and plane and boat from all over the United States. They are the symbol of America's strength and its weakness. They are ingenious, ambitious, marvelously organized into enterprises of all kinds. But their weakness is in their family life. Would they, like the Chinese, be able to stand up when the whole high and complex material civilization breaks down? No, they wouldn't, unless they will develop the mature strength of family life which has been the strength of the Chinese. The strength of a civilization is revealed by the strength of its family life.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Enslin

(*Continued from page 22*)

when attending a service where another is so engaged, to demonstrate a lack of manners which he should be the first to regret.

Little foxes can and do spoil some mighty valuable vines. It is, however—with a slight shift of horticultural figure—possible to bring forth fruits of repentence.

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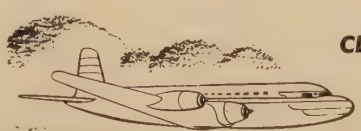

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Pulpit Paragraphs

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A RECENT issue of *Life* magazine cites the testimony which a young Los Alamos shop foreman gave in a Manhattan court relative to vital A-bomb information which he admits that he passed on to Russian spies.

• *The Implosive Force of Calvary*

The first A-bombs were all of the "explosive" type. The present bomb is "implosive" as well. It appears that the bomb mechanism is set up in a series of concentric spheres. At the center is a sphere of substance which when subjected to pressure or heat must explode. However, in the sphere contiguous is a porous plutonium, which when the switch is thrown exerts pressure inward with an action known as "implosion." It is believed that the great increase in power of the present A-bombs is due to the meeting of these opposite forces.

Here was Jesus at the center of a sphere of influence which in quality of living and in content of ethical principles demanded infinite expansion. In the concentric sphere about him were the Jewish ecclesiastics who sought to shrink and nullify his influence by compassing his death. The two opposite forces came together on Calvary. The implosion gave way to and mightily enhanced the explosion. A series of chain reactions was set off, releasing spiritual power and influence beyond anything which the wildest fears of the ecclesiastics had conjured up.—*F. B. McDowell, First Presbyterian Church, Junction City, Kan.*

• *Present-day Thinking*

INDICATIVE of present - day thought levels is the music that we listen to. The ten most listened-to tunes currently, according to a record firm, are "Goodnight, Irene," "Mona Lisa," "Sam's Song," "Tzena, Tzena, Tzena," "Simple Melody," "I Wanna Be Loved," "Can Anyone Explain," "Sentimental Me," "Cincinnati Dancing Pig" and "La Vie en Rose." Put these to the test of intellectual content and you will find that none of them are profound. As a matter of fact, most of them are not far above the nursery rhymes that entertain our children. The secret of their appeal is their simplicity and repetition, both of words and of melody.

The movie star that is most popular, year after year, is not a flesh-and-blood actor but a creation of an artist's imagination, Mickey Mouse. His closest rival is a similar character, Donald Duck. The average movie is on the intellectual level of a twelve-year-old, and the worst "flops" of current times are those that attempt to present some social problem. The money-minded movie-house operator and the equally money-minded producer realize that if they are to show a profit they must not present pictures that cause people to think. As a result, most of our movies encourage fanastic thinking. As a matter of fact, nearly all of them are unreal, elaborately enlarged daydreams.

Our most popular radio and television stars are the comedians, such as Bob Hope, Jack Benny and Milton Berle. We laugh and forget our troubles with a wooden dummy by the name of Charlie McCarthy. Daytime shows run to soap operas like "John's Other Wife," and all of us are guilty of dreaming and "living like millionaires" on some give-away program.

Our reading is equally indicative of our lack of realism and constructive thinking. Our children absorb most of their knowledge from Superman, Dick Tracy, Secret Agent X-9, Popeye, Blondie and Little Orphan Annie. We adults prefer our reading in the pleasant capsule form, such as the Reader's Digest and its thousand-and-one imitators offer. If that is too deep for us, we look at the pictures in *Life* and *Look*.

Even the field of religion is suffering from this mental laziness on the part of the general public. One evidence is the growing popularity of the sect groups that live either in the past or in the future. Promises of otherwordly rewards or regression to the theologies of a century ago bring the acclaim of the crowd. Evangelists with a cynical, destructive attitude toward the established churches are drawing thousands in our large cities today. Though most of these religious leaders are largely isolationist in world outlook and otherwise blind in many of their viewpoints, they have a mighty appeal to a public that is looking for "thrills" and not for reason.—*Paul S. Kurtz, First Methodist, Reedley, Calif.*

• *Refining Influences*

AS a boy growing up in a river city I used to stand on the bridge and watch the carp swimming about near the sewer outlets. We boys enjoyed searching for the largest of these dirty brown scavengers as we watched them glide through the murky water. Occasionally we would fish for them—just for sport, because carp are not edible when taken from such environments.

On the cabinet in my study are two little goldfish in a bowl. Watching them, one finds it hard to realize that these pretty fish are cousins to those carp and that if turned back into the river they would soon become dirty brown scavengers with no trace of their former beauty.

So it is with the human spirits. Through the refining influence of the Christian life, the golden beauty that God gave our spirits shows forth, but if we feed our souls only on sordidness and filth that beauty is soon lost. They become unlovely to see or undesirable to know.—*David S. Evans, Community Church, Okemos, Mich.*

• *The Fellowship Of Believers*

I RECENTLY talked to a young couple who had traveled widely by car in Europe. Several years ago, they related, they had picked up a Dutch couple in Holland who were thumbing a ride to a near-by city. It was lunch time, so they invited the Hollanders to picnic with them. Before partaking of the picnic lunch the Dutch couple bowed their heads for a moment of thanks. In telling me about the incident my friends remarked that they still correspond with the Dutch couple, and then made this comment: "It's easy to have a deep friendship when all of you believe." There is no question but that a living belief is one of the most cherished and sought-after possessions that man can have.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Pulpit Calendar

June 3—Third Sunday after Pentecost.
June 8—Sovereign's Birthday (United Kingdom, Canada, Australia).
June 10—Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Children's Sunday; Shavoth (Jewish); Students' Sunday (Methodist).
June 14—Flag Day (U.S.A.).
June 17—Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; Father's Day.
June 24—Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; Nature Sunday.
July 1—Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; Independence Sunday (U.S.A.); Dominion Day (Canada).
July 4—Independence Day (U.S.A. and the Philippines).
July 5—Fast of Tammuz (Jewish).
July 8—Eighth Sunday after Pentecost.
July 15—Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.
July 22—Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
July 29—Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 5—Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 12—Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost; Tishah Beab (Jewish).
Aug. 19—Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 26—Festival of the Christ of King.
Sept. 2—Labor Sunday.
Sept. 3—Labor Day.
Sept. 9—Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 16—Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 23—Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

SEASON: Whitsuntide.
ALTAR COLORS: Whitsunday and Trinity, white; Whitsuntide, green.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

Sermon Summaries

When Jesus Makes You Nervous

PILATE was nervous. His forebrain knew what he should do but his interbrain was all mixed up. He had the fidgets. Have you ever had the fidgets? When you catch yourself jumping around all over the place you have the fidgets—or maybe we should say the fidgets have you.

Look at your text. Ten times you see Pilate bobbing at the trial. Why? You know the answer. He was trying to duck Christ. First in, then out, then in, then out. Here it is:

He was in the palace and then our text begins. "Pilate therefore went out unto them and saith . . . Pilate therefore entered again into the palace . . . and when he said this, he went out again." Look out, Pilate, you're getting the fidgets. "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him." At least he spared him the shame of scourging him before the mob. "Then Pilate went out again and saith unto them . . . and he entered into the palace again." Then he went out again, because the next verse reads, "Pilate sought to release him but the Jews cried out . . ." Then he goes in again because the next verse finds him coming out thus: "When Pilate therefore heard these words he brought Jesus out." (John 18:29, 33, 38; 19:4, 9, 12, 13.)

Isn't that some collection? Now you see him, now you don't. Mr. Can't-sit-still is in a tizzy; nervous, irritated, jumpy. And the one reason is that he is not at peace with Christ.

When Jesus makes you nervous, what can you do? There are three things I want to propose concerning Pilate and peace of mind.

In the first place, absolutely nothing is worth enough to sacrifice your right relationship with Christ for it.

If Pilate let Jesus go free he would have to give up his throne, his riches, his position, his power, his concubines, his prestige, and it just didn't seem worth it. Yes, we know, Pilate! Sometimes we too discover ourselves pushing aside the question, "What is my duty?" and using the question, "What is to my personal interest?" in making our decision.

The second voice which stands up to speak its piece as we think about Pilate is this: Your place in history and your importance to mankind depend on how you are related to Christ.

Pilate could have been the hero of the ages, but today his name is a byword and a hissing. He is one of history's most depised characters. Life has a way of reversing its choices so that history has assigned to some of its chief seats men who were insignificant among their contemporaries. Likewise, it has buried forever in the rubbles some of the most lofty of another day.

At the end of all his nervous bobbing in and out, the Scripture tells us, "Pilate handed him over to be crucified." So they took Jesus away. Or did they? Did they really take him away? You know they didn't. Pilate did not get rid of him that easily. Millions know now who took that round. Pontius Pilate lost what he thought he had so surely won. This is the message. You always lose when you put anything else ahead of Jesus.

The final thing to be said about Christ and Pilate and one's nerves is a positive thing: The more right your relationship with Christ, the more peace and power you have for your living. You can't get peace with alibis. By washing your hands you cannot wash away sin. The only way to make real peace is to make peace with the Lord of all life.

Pilate really wanted to do justly, I think. You see him several times trying to outargue them. He really does examine Jesus and once when he asks him, "What is the truth?" we see him too nervous to wait for an answer. He asks and runs away. Then he hits upon a brilliant idea. He will, as is the custom on these feast days, give the people their choice between this quiet carpenter and a sorry character named Barabbas. Surely this will get him out of the jam. But they cry, "Release unto us Barabbas!" Then Pilate tries to trick the accusers into killing Jesus without his authority, but they are too smart for that. At last he declares openly, "I find no fault in him." Still, they will stop at nothing short of the death sentence. So in desperation he calls for a basin of water and there before the crowd he washes his hands of the whole affair and says, "See, I am absolving myself of the blame. Now that I am washed free of sin, you take him and have your way."

When Jesus makes you nervous remember that nothing is worth the sacrifice of a right relationship with him. Tell yourself that your place in history and your worth in life depend upon a right relationship with him. And above all else, if you want peace and calm, power and radiance in your outer life, then in your interbrain you must have a right relationship with him.

He who seeks life in any other way is a dying vine. He who seats Christ on the little throne deep within will live forever.—*Charlie W. Shedd, First Presbyterian, Ponca City, Okla.*

In Our Present Wonderland

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Tim. 2:15.

SOME TIME ago, while visiting in a little out-of-the-way community having not much in the way of human fellowship, I turned to the best substitute I knew—reading. But in this humble home I found very little to select from, so I ended the search for books with a rather tattered copy of *Alice in Wonderland.*

It was a long time since I had read this fairy tale. But at the close of this first half of the 20th century it ought to be reread by every adult.

The conversation between Alice and the Mock Turtle could have taken place in any group today in any of our high school or college communities. The Mock Turtle begins, "I only took the regular course." "What was that?" inquires Alice. "Reeling and writhing, to begin with, of course," replies the Mock Turtle. "And then, the four Distraction, Uglification and Derision."

Let us spend a little while today considering these in their natural contrasting order.

Ambition. Most of you are in school today, but would it shock your complacency very much for me to ask just why you are in school? Well, I am actually afraid to ask for fear someone would be honest enough to say, "I am in school because I should like to be better prepared to make money,"—rather than to be better prepared to serve others—"to add more to my possessions, to gain personal power and prestige. After all, is that not what education is for? Is it not true that its very motive is profit rather than vocation? Are you so backward, Mr. Preacher, that you do not recognize that our very social order calls us to a life of money-making, rather than to a life of service?"

That is what is wrong with our world today. The most tragic sight on the horizon of our day is the smoke rising from the altars of ambition. All about me, each day that I live, I see families, friends, character, health and many souls being sacrificed, all for material accumulation and wealth. Is this the end of our education? Have we in it all forgotten the words of the Pioneer of life, who warned us that "life does not consist of the abundance of things," who asked what is our profit if we gain the whole world and lose our souls?

Distraction. How sheltered we are, how given we are to escape from the reality of obligation, duty, suffering, and the personal dedication of self to sacrifice which calls us beyond the line of amusement and pleasure!

Besieged by all types of advertisements suggesting ways by which we can amuse ourselves, many times it is quite easy for us to forget others and become lost, impotent souls while lingering in the byways of distraction; forgetting the words of the Christ who warned that he or she who be master of life must first learn to live abundantly through service dedicated to a cause outside of self. So while we flounder about seeking self-

satisfaction, let us ask ourselves, "Is it for self or the sake of others that we engage ourselves?"

Uglification. Have we not many times, with our unappreciative arrogance, made ugly the very beauty of God. How many times have we been guilty of satisfying some selfish greed or lust, forgetting that when we do so we uglify God's creation?

Derision. As a smart-alec age echoes with the fools of yesteryears, "There is no God," the words of the Psalmist become true. We are being besieged by so much scorn, mockery and contempt that the average man feels that maybe it is unscientific to be religious or that trust and belief in God are outmoded.

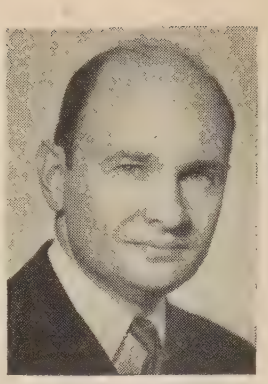
The very people who, not too long ago, were saying that it was not scientific to look to God for guidance and solution to our many problems in this Atomic Age, tell us that God is our only hope. It is stranger than fiction itself that the same people who have been telling us that Christianity could not save the world, should remind us now that it is not by power nor by might, but by the spirt of the Christ that we shall have any future in a world where hostile nations are armed with atomic and hydrogen bombs.—*Major J. Jones, Educational Secretary, Atlanta Methodist Conference, Atlanta, Ga.*

• *Hallowing the Commonplace*

HOW do we keep our spirit sensitized to the spirit of God? Sometimes we do it by the infinite longings in our heart and soul that make us restless until we find rest in God. Sometimes we do it in the high moments of inspiration when our life is lifted by the sight of beauty, an act of heroism, the silent hush of quiet meditation. Sometimes the spirit of God comes in the moment of defeat as we find a power within that we were not conscious of, that enables us to grow until we are able to master our defeats. Sometimes it comes, as it came to Jacob of old, as we wrestle with the lower self until the higher self is victorious. Sometimes it comes in just doing our work day by day in the best and finest way we know, and we become conscious of the unseen Presence of the spirit of Christ within our life. The secret of Christianity is that we can hallow the common task and make it uncommon with the Presence Divine.—*Frank A. Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

Mediocrity will not mark the new age. It will be either ghastly or glorious.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain at the University of Chicago.*

It has been said, "Not failure, but low end is crime." I would amend it to read, "Not failure, but no aim is stupid"—and that is still worse.—*Morton S. Enslin.*



Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The Adoration of God

IN ALL the standard patterns for the public worship of God a provision is made in the opening movement for adoration. People come into the presence of God and know that certain responses and amenities are to be expected in the experience of worship about to begin.

Such responses are the natural reaction of the human spirit when it stands in the overpowering presence of God. They are primal and elemental reactions of the worshiper who really understands that he has come forth to meet the Lord of the universe in the holy communion of worship. Before this tremendous Presence the worshiper can only bow in reverence and adoration, in love, gratitude and awe. If a person does not feel this sense of the *mysterium tremendum,* he is hardly in a position to hear the voice of God, to contemplate the divine will and to offer his life in reasonable service to the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Here is the point where worship often fails. The service does not provide an adequate opportunity for the congregation to lift their voices in praise and adoration. Most people need to be stimulated into this awareness of Deity by the opening movement of the service. All too often, however, this movement is too short to make room for the transition from the concerns and anxieties of the world to the glory of God and the realities of the spiritual life. Often adoration is offered only in terms of a hymn, and sometimes even a hymn so poorly chosen that it is not one of adoration at all. This opening movement ought to be broad and rich in its allegro-like flow. What can be done to accomplish this? What materials of worship are at hand for this opening movement of the liturgy?

Hymns constitute the most readily available material. The minister who fails to use a hymn of adoration in the opening movement of the liturgy simply does not know the A B C of worship. This is no moment for a subjective hymn. A great hymn to Deity ought to open the service. Good examples are "Holy, Holy, Holy," "O day of rest and gladness," "Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore Him," "God of our fathers, whose almighty hand," "All hail the power of Jesus' Name," "Joyful, joyful, we adore thee," "When morning gilds the skies," "For the beauty of the earth." If this opening hymn is sung in processional, the musical text must be in 4/4 time. This basic hymn, placed at the head of the service, offers the congregation the best possible transition into the exalted mood of worship.

Ancient canticles offer additional material through which to expand the note of adoration. These canticles are familiar to everybody: the Doxology, the Gloria Patri, the Sanctus, the Te Deum laudamus, the Venite, exaltemus Domino. Because these canticles are so ancient and well known, the worshiper feels secure in their use.

Various acts of adoration constitute another body of materials making this experience of praise possible. Many of the church hymnals now contain such acts of adoration. They are also found in service books such as the American edition of the Grey Book, known as *The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory,* and Dr. Hunter's well known *Book of Devotional Services.* A fine set of acts of adoration, used by one church and set to music by Oscar Hertsgaard, is as follows:

Glory be to God on high,
And on earth peace, good will toward men.
We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee,
We give thanks to thee for thy great glory,
O Lord God, Heavenly King,
God, the Father Almighty.
For thou only art holy,
Thou only art the Lord,
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
Art most high in the glory of God the Father.
O Lord, save the state.
And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.
Give peace in our time, O Lord,
For it is thou that makest us to dwell in safety and righteousness.
O Lord, open thou our lips
And our mouths shall show forth thy praise.

The anthem of adoration is another available way of referring the human spirit to God. Let this anthem be strong and objective. Good examples are: "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones" by Coln; "Hallelujah to the Lord," "Father Most Holy" and "Praise to the Lord" by Christiansen; "O Be Joyful, All Ye Lands" by Gretchaninoff; "To Thee We Sing" by Tkach; "I am Alpha and Omega" by Stainer; "God Is a Spirit" by Scholin; "The Cherubim Song" by Glinka; "The Cherubim Song" by Bortniansky.

Our problem next month will be to study the arrangement of these materials of worship in the opening movement of the liturgy.

Books for the Preacher

SCRIBNERS has an entry in the current publishers' race to find the right book to meet the demand for an up-to-date volume on sermon construction and delivery. **Theodore Parker Ferris** is the author of GO TELL THE PEOPLE (Scribners, $3.00)—116 pages of comments and suggestions about preaching. Dr. Ferris is rector of Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, Boston, and teaches homiletics at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Mass. His little book is readable and helpful. At best, however, it is supplementary reading on the subject. As a collection of essays on preaching, ministers and theological students will find it the literary peer of any of the more recent offerings in the field. They will hardly agree that the words "ought," "should" and "must" have no proper place in present-day preaching, even though they believe with the author that "the preponderance of the indicative mode" should characterize most sermons. The most valuable feature of the book is a final chapter discussing those ever present preacher problems: pressure, dryness, doubt, nervousness and ineffectiveness.

A BOOK that every preacher will find valuable is **Stanley I. Stuber's** ★★ PUBLIC RELATIONS MANUAL FOR CHURCHES (Doubleday, $3.00). The paragraph "If you want to keep out of trouble," page 145, is worth the price of the book. Actually most of the volume is devoted to matters outside the province of this reviewer. But the chapters "How audio-visual aids preach the gospel," "How to make the best use of radio," "How to make the best use of television," and "The gospel message is front-page news" have to do with the preaching as well as the administrative functions of the minister. They are chock full of good suggestions. Especially commended to pastors who aspire to be writers is chapter 24, "How to write for religious journals." Dr. Stuber gives in brief outline a course in practical religious journalism that, taken seriously by minister-authors, would result in many less rejection slips.

SEVERAL books have been lying on this reviewer's desk for some time. Each merits a full paragraph but there is too little space remaining to give them more than brief mention. If you will delete some of the moral tags the author seems never able to resist, **Joseph A. Schofield's** ★A YEAR OF CHILDREN'S SERMONS (W. A. Wilde, Boston, $1.75) is considerably better than the average book of sermons for children. Preachers who like to weave stories from popular fiction or the classics into their sermons will find THE WORD LIVES ON edited by **Frances Brentano** (Doubleday, $3.95), a valuable source of illustrations. The book contains 64 selections from as many authors and an interesting introduction by **Halford Luccock.** Another splendid source of timely illustrations is a small paper-back book edited by **Mary Margaret Brace** and **Lucy M. Eldredge.** Entitled NOW! and published by Friendship Press (price, 35 cents), the stories in it tell how the church is taking root in all sections and among all segments of America.

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS.

ROUNDUP

★★YE SHALL BE COMFORTED. By **William F. Rogers.** Westminster, $1.50. This "Pastoral Aid Book" is just that. Excellent help in dealing with death and grief. Primarily pastoral, the book has good sermonic resource material in chapters of Part I. Encyclopedic scriptural and literary resources on general subject offer homiletical seeds. This book will help the pastor be a better preacher in his ministry of comfort, and will help the preacher be a better pastor when sorrow comes to his people.—*Hoover Rupert, First Methodist, Jackson, Mich.*

THE THEOLOGY OF REINHOLD NIEBUHR. By **Edward J. Carnell.** Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich., $3.50. "Since my own faith is most accurately expressed in classical Reformation theology, I naturally evaluate Niebuhr from the perspective of orthodoxy . . . I trust, however, that I have been both fair and objective in my labor. If I have failed, it is from want of personal skill, not resolution." The author thus states his case in the preface. He refers to J. Gresham Machen's "classic volume, CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM. The work remains today as one of the best defences of the conservative faith against modernism. His arguments apply, *mutatis mutandis,* to neo-orthodoxy likewise" (p. 22). Carnell attempts to apply Machen's methods and arguments, *mutatis mutandis,* to Niebuhr. Typographical errors are many.—*W. B. Bryan, Dean, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn.*

THE CHRIST OF ALL NATIONS. By **Paul Guinness.** Association Press, $2.75. Christ's life told in detail as a single story utilizing the language of the Authorized Version. Interesting reading and of value to persons not thoroughly familiar with the sequence of events in Jesus' life. Of little value to the preacher.—*Joseph S. Johnston, Epworth Methodist, Norfolk, Va.*

★★THESE FOUND THE WAY. Edited by **David W. Soper.** Westminster, $2.50. A symposium in which 13 Protestant Christians of diverse backgrounds tell of personal experiences that led to Christian decision. Former Communists, converted atheists, a college professor, a businessman, a former Roman priest, a Methodist bishop and others provide rich resources for sermon seeds and illustrations. Former priest's chapter is good source material for Reformation Sunday.—*Hoover Rupert, First Methodist, Jackson, Mich.*

★CHRISTIAN FAITH AND MY JOB. By **Alexander Miller.** Haddam House, 59 cents. A paper-backed reprint of a 1946 book. Points up the problems Christians face in fulfilling their calling, which "means far more than to do our work well and maintain our station in life." Without minimizing the importance of the minister's vocation, the author suggests that "frontline trenches of Christian warfare" are in secular work. Fulfilling our calling means serving God and general welfare through our jobs. Stimulating reading; preachable ideas. Give copies to labor union friends and thoughtful young people.—*C. Willard Fetter, First Evangelical United Brethren, Akron, Ohio.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

An analysis based on reports from leading religious book sellers and from the reading of The Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.

April	May	This Month	
4	1	1	**So We Believe, So We Pray.** *George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.75
1	2	2	**Anointed to Preach.** *Clovis G. Chappell. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $1.50
2	3	3	**Here I Stand.** *Roland H. Bainton. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $4.75
3	4	4	**Life of Jesus.** *Edgar J. Goodspeed. Harper,* $3.00
		5	**Church Lobbying in the Nation's Capitol.** *Luke Ebersole. Macmillan,* $2.75
		6	**Wake Up or Blow Up.** *Frank C. Laubach. Revell,* $2.00
5	5	7	**The Gospel in Modern Thought.** *Alan Richardson. Oxford,* $2.00
10	8	8	**The Belief in Progress.** *John Baillie. Scribners,* $2.75
	6	9	**Christianity and History.** *Herbert Butterfield. Scribners,* $2.75
6	7	10	**The Christianity of Main Street.** *Theodore O. Wedel. Macmillan,* $2.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

TRANSCENDING all controversy over the policies advocated by General Douglas MacArthur in connection with the Korean war, his return to the U. S. after being abruptly dismissed from the multiple and lofty responsibilities which he had discharged with renowned distinction produced a human event felt in every part of the world. The acclaim of the millions who bade him farewell in Japan, greeted him on his way, and massed in mighty throngs to welcome him home, was an expression of the profound confidence in his character and wisdom which had long been taking form in the popular mind. That other feelings were mixed with the popular enthusiasm, none need deny. No doubt the manner of his dismissal aroused deep resentment in many hearts. No doubt the political possibilities of his presence in the midst of an unprecedented national crisis evoked strong partisan hopes. No doubt many were moved by the fact that our sons were fighting and dying in an indecisive war whose purpose was too obscure for the rank and file of the people to understand. That considerations such as these were mixed with the enthusiasm for the man himself, there can be no doubt. But having seen and heard him on television and radio and especially in that climactic moment when he addressed Congress, the people feel that the personality of the man measured up to and more than confirmed the impression made by the story of his achievements which had long preceded his return. What is MacArthur's greatest achievement? Every man will answer this in his own way. I shall answer for myself. When, as a conqueror, MacArthur reached the shores of Japan on the battleship Missouri, he brought with him a concept of his duty more nearly Christian than any conqueror before him had ever entertained. The sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and the tremendous cost in blood and treasure that had been paid for victory—these did not control his purpose. He took counsel "not of the flesh but of the spirit" and wrought a reconciliation and a reconstruction of a defeated people which the world will never forget.

MacArthur's Return—a Great Human Event

The Book of the Month

DEMOCRACY AND THE CHURCHES, *by James Hastings Nichols. Westminster Press, $4.50.*

WHENCE came democracy into the modern world? Its source, says Professor Nichols, was religious. It was the contribution of churches. But not of all the churches. Roman Catholicism, continental Lutheranism and established Anglicanism played no part in its origin nor in the development of democratic ideals and practices. The religious sources and later allies of democracy were the churches of Puritan Protestantism—Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Unitarians, Quakers, Disciples of Christ, Salvation Army and the evangelical party in the Anglican church. The first three despite differences among themselves, shared in common the Calvinist tradition of church order which embodied the following principles: (1) The supreme and final authority in the church is Jesus Christ. (2) The authority of the church's officebearers is derived from the consent of the Christian community. (3) The consent of the community is to be obtained by the process of free discussion. (4) Its decisions may not be interfered with by the state. Calvin's principles were championed by the Puritans and Separatists in England and New England, and gradually infiltrated into the political thinking of the time. My space allows me only to cross the threshold of this book. Its documentation of the consistent resistance of Roman Catholicism to the democratic movement is a gold mine of historical information.

A Thought for the Month

OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH has to do with the wholeness of man. It is no marginal affair, no special interest alongside other interests. God will concede no area of our time or our talents or our possessions or our vocation as lying outside the domain of his sovereignty. We give him all or none. To offer him Sunday and reserve the weekdays in which to deny him Sunday. To offer him one talent and withhold our other gifts is to deny him even the one. To offer him a mere junior partnership in our vocation is to reject him altogether. God can brook no competitor in our lives. This is the Christian meaning of that harsh-sounding Old Testament admonition: "Our God is a jealous God." He will not abide with us while we cling to any idol. And whatever we reserve from him is our idol. The growing emphasis in all the churches upon tithing our income represents, I growingly feel, a sound practical method of supporting the church. But there is danger in the way it is stated by many of its promoters and, I fear, by many who practice it. It should not be conceived as the part of our income that belongs to God, while the nine-tenths is reserved for ourselves. Rather, it is a practical device to measure what portion of our income should be given to the support of the church, while all the rest also belongs to God.

'All That Is Within Me'

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

A NUMBER of interesting facts have emerged from the Selection of the Seminarian Preacher of the Year, the results of which will be announced in the July Pulpit. Foremost among these discoveries is the fact that a great many of our seminaries are not yet aware that a new concern for and interest in the preaching ministry has developed during the past few years. The art of preaching is still relegated to a minor place in the curriculum of most American seminaries.

The day when Americans would take seriously proposals to declare a moratorium on preaching has long since passed. The lack of interest in the preached word was a concomitant of the "liberalism" of the early decades of this century. The failure of that emphasis to meet the needs of people enmeshed in economic depression and war resulted in its passing. Some concomitants remain to plague us. This idea that preaching is a secondary function of the minister is one of them. While few pastors on the field would harbor such an idea, many seminaries evidently do. However, there is ample evidence that the more forward-looking institutions have sensed the need for strong preachers who can speak out clearly and forcefully. Interesting experiments in preacher-training at Duke, the College of the Bible, McCormick and several other schools witness to this fact.

For the most part the sermons submitted in the Seminarian Selection are far above the average of the manuscripts that pass over our desks at The Pulpit every day. But we are impressed by the number of letters from deans and presidents of schools of religion saying either that no students were interested in participating in the selection or that sermons submitted were all of such poor quality that the local judges decided not to enter any of them in the national finals. A quick check through the catalogues of some of these schools gives a clue to the reason for this lack of interest or failure to produce. In several cases homiletics is tagged on to the class load of a professor whose main interest is another field.

The Seminarian Preacher of the Year Selection is sponsored for the one purpose of calling attention to the importance of training candidates for the ministry to be capable preachers. In this first year the participation and interest in the selection has far exceeded our expectations. Letters from students and professors testify that in many institutions it has created a new interest in preaching. But beyond the efforts of this magazine there is a need for preachers and laymen to interest themselves in preacher-training in the seminaries of their denominations. Do you know what the theological schools of your denomination are offering in this field? If it is inadequate, have you taken any steps to do anything about it? G. E. H.

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Founded 1929

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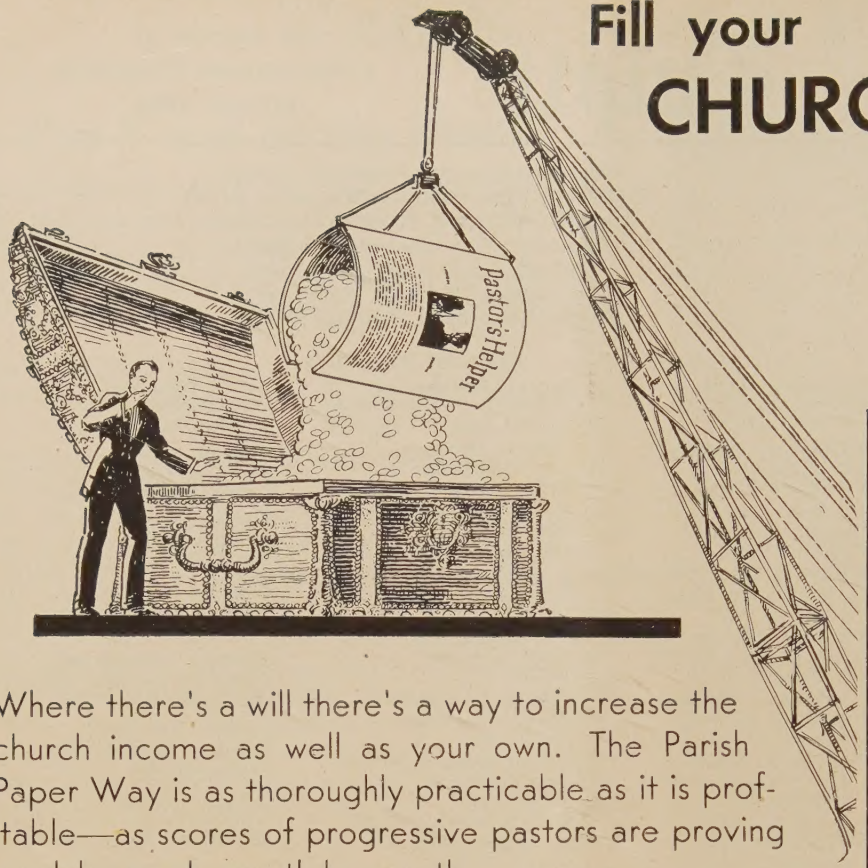

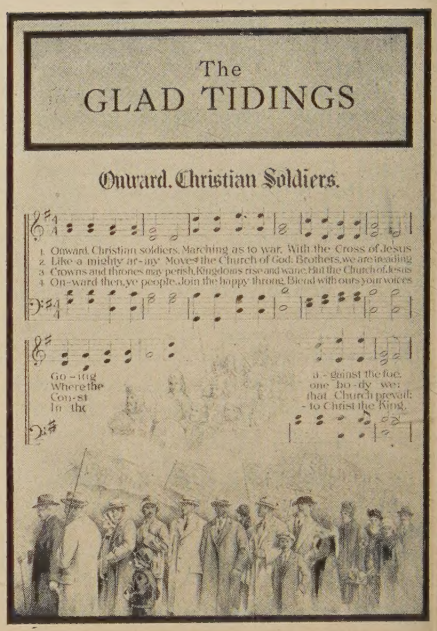

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